

Premier Houston Takes Questions from Reporters After Cabinet: Thursday, Oct. 7, 2021

<https://fb.watch/9ayitfKTq8/> (at the 9:00 minute mark)

9:00

Q: Premier, there was a Court decision yesterday on a sort of longstanding issue involving disabled Nova Scotians who don't have appropriate housing. Are you going to continue to pursue that case in court?

A: No. And off the top I want to... sincere condolences to the family of Beth MacLean and Sheila Livingstone. What I want to say is... their courage - along with Joey Delaney – the courage that they showed in pursuing this will leave a legacy. And we... I just don't think anyone should really have to take their government to court to make their government do the right thing. So we've received the message - loud and clear. We will work with the community to make sure that the supports are in place.

Q: Premier, when it comes to Small Option Homes, you...you don't just push a button and they open.

A: Exactly.

Q: It costs a lot of money. It takes a lot of time.

A: Yeah.

Q: There's a long wait for them.

A: Yeah.

Q: How is your government going to approach that issue?

A: And put that in the face of the housing crisis we have already... and so. We know the challenge. And I do think that previous governments have – you know - I don't think anyone meant any disrespect. They are just dealing with the challenges that are before the government, and the challenges are real. So...what I would say is I can't fix this overnight – nobody can. But the message has been received very clearly that it's to be fixed. And we will do everything we can. We'll work with the community. We'll be honest with the community, frank with the community, but... we'll do everything we can to do what's possible as quickly as it ... as it can be done.

Q: Where does that put you in terms of the 10-year Roadmap that was discussed when you were asked that question on the campaign trail. You didn't admit to anything there. Where do we stand with that?

A: I mean look – we have to do what’s right by Nova Scotians, so I think we have to revisit that and look at what the Roadmap kind of laid out. Lay that out with... against our own conscience and against, obviously, what the courts have said, but... We’re going to do that work. We’re going to do that in consultation with the community, but we ... The overriding goal is we want to make sure that the supports are in place. And that’s the directive that the courts have given. It’s the right thing to do. It’s the human thing to do. And it’s what we’ll do.

Q: Is there anything systemic that you can do, in the short term at least, to get you started?

A: Yeah – the financial considerations – all of those things – you know – we’ll have to work through. I’ll call that “working through the details of it”, but the overriding message that’s been received is “do what’s right”. We’ll make sure we’ll do what we can to get the supports in place.

Q: Premier, do you accept that there is systemic discrimination against disabled Nova Scotians....?

A: I mean – look – I think it’s... what I think is that people did the best they could to provide the supports with what they had. I just think this was... this was tricky to provide the supports and maybe there needed to be more direction on (“and”?) “do whatever is necessary”. But, as we stand here right now, we know we have to take a different path as a government. And we’re prepared to take that...to take that path.

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