

January 13, 2012



Honourable Ramona Jennex  
Minister of Education  
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Dear Minister Jennex:

On behalf of the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia (TIANS), we are writing to seek assistance on an issue related to recent changes to the school field trip insurance program.

Over the past year, TIANS has been approached to assist with an issue affecting adventure tourism operators. Tidal bore rafting companies in Nova Scotia have reported wide spread cancellations of school field trips beginning in 2011. From our research, it appears an internal policy change has reclassified tidal bore rafting into the same category as whitewater rafting. This has affected school decisions across Nova Scotia in being able to provide this experiential learning opportunity to their students.



We have contacted the schools regarding this issue and were referred to the School Insurance Program (SIP) who has declined our requests to meet. It appears this unexpected and random policy change is not based on liability issues in regards to tidal bore rafting. In fact, the tidal bore rafting companies own insurance providers classify them as a flat water activity and have no concerns regarding business coverage. These insurance agents have attempted to connect with SIP as well, but to no avail.



This change is resulting in a significant revenue loss to rural tourism businesses. Conservative estimates from two businesses have placed their school trip revenue loss at \$50,000 for 2011 alone. Adventure tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors and the ability of companies in Nova Scotia to extend their operating season is being greatly impacted by the reclassification that has taken place. This policy appears to contravene the government's efforts in the 'jobsHere' Strategy to create a competitive and progressive business climate.

TIANS would greatly appreciate any direction from the Department of Education, suggesting an appropriate forum in which this issue can be addressed. With the 2012 season approaching a resolution on this issue is crucial.

Sincerely,

Darlene Grant Fiander  
President

cc Minister Percy Paris, Economic and Rural Development and Tourism  
Nova Scotia School Board Association  
TIANS Board