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April 22, 2021

Warden Penny Smith
Municipality of Shelburne
136 Hammond Street
PO Box 280
Shelburne, NS B0T 1W0

Dear Warden Smith:

RE: Georges Bank Moratorium

Thank you for your March 31, 2021 letter expressing the Municipality of Shelburne's Council's support for the continuation of the Georges Bank Oil and Gas Exploration and Drilling Moratorium.

The Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia jointly manage offshore oil and gas development in the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Area and are firmly committed to the responsible management of offshore resources while ensuring the highest level of environmental protection.

I share your perspective and interest on the ecological importance and environmental sensitivity of Georges Bank. This is why the protection of the fishing grounds and habitat in this area has been supported through federal and provincial moratoria on oil and gas activities since 1988.

As you may know, Governments may extend the moratorium in increments of up to ten years through a joint federal - provincial Ministerial decision. I want to be clear that our government wants to see the moratorium renewed and is working with the federal government for that to happen. Prior to this, the legislation requires a review to take place that examines environmental and socio-economic impacts of exploration and drilling activities. My Department has been working closely with our joint management partner, Natural Resources Canada, on this matter and will launch this review in the coming weeks.

Warden Penny Smith
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As requested in your letter, I have instructed my Department officials to inform and engage your Council during the review process. Governments will work together to ensure a decision on the extension of the moratorium is made well in advance of the 2022 deadline.

Once again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chuck Porter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Honourable Chuck Porter
Minister

c: Honourable Seamus O'Regan Jr., P.C., M.P.