

NEWS RELEASE

Per-person spending in Nova Scotia has increased from \$2,114 to \$12,880 (in 2021 inflation-adjusted dollars) since 1965

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For Immediate Release

HALIFAX—From 1965 to 2021, per-person spending in Nova Scotia increased substantially from \$2,114 (in 2021 inflation-adjusted dollars) to \$12,880, finds a new report published today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“An effective way of measuring a government’s fiscal policy is by comparing per-person program spending by various Premiers,” said Alex Whalen, senior economist with the Fraser Institute and co-author of *Nova Scotia Premiers and Provincial Government Spending*.

This study reviews annual per-person program spending (inflation-adjusted) by Nova Scotia premiers from 1965 to 2021, and finds that the highest per-person spending on record was under Premier Robert Stanfield, with a 20.7 per cent average annual change in per person spending (based on the available data from 1965 to 1967), followed by George Smith (8.7 per cent), Gerald Regan (7.1 per cent), and Rodney MacDonald (6.3 per cent).

Overall, Stephen McNeil (2.4 per cent), John Buchanan (1.1 per cent), Tim Houston (0.7 per cent, one year of data) join Darrell Dexter (0.4 per cent) as the four premiers who increased per-person inflation adjusted spending the least during this period.

John Savage stands out as the only premier who presided over a decrease in this measure, with per-person inflation adjusted spending declining by 4.0 percent during his tenure.

“The intention is to provide a historical analysis of this key measure of government fiscal policy,” said Whalen.

“It will be important to see how per-person inflation-adjusted spending develops in Nova Scotia moving forward.”

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