

**Political Donations
Annual Report 2017**



January 1 to December 31, 2017
Published June 2018 by Chief Electoral Officer

Message from the Chief Electoral Officer

June 2018

The *Elections Act* limits provincial political donations to people who live in Nova Scotia. This report lists the name, community and the amount donated for each person who gave \$200 or more to a registered party, electoral district association or candidate in 2017. It also includes information on the timeliness and quality of the donation reports filed by their Official Agents.

This report is published every year as required by Sections 240 and 251 of the *Elections Act*.

Collecting and sharing this information in a timely way, helps to bring clarity and transparency to the financial activities of all who are required to file.

Elections Nova Scotia (ENS) staff are proactive in supporting individuals, groups and parties by helping them with their record keeping so they can file their reports properly and on time. Staff also send deadline reminders when needed. Most reports are filed on or before their deadlines.

Donations made to candidates during the May 2017 general election are not included in this report. They were published on the Elections Nova Scotia website <https://electionsnovascotia.ca/election-data/past-results/may-2017> as the reports were filed by each candidate's Official Agent.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Temporale
Chief Electoral Officer

Elections Nova Scotia Review Process

Political Donations Rules

The *Elections Act* spells out the rules for accepting donations, making or receiving loans, and for issuing tax receipts. It sets deadlines for filing reports and gives the Chief Electoral Officer the authority to prescribe forms.

Donation Limit and Eligibility Reviews

Limits

Only residents of Nova Scotia can make a political donation. Subsection 236(1) of the *Act* also caps the amount at \$5,000 to a party, its electoral district associations (EDAs) and its registered candidates combined in a calendar year. Compliance with the limit can be a problem for a party because its EDAs and candidates can accept donations independently. ENS ensures compliance through a review of all donation disclosure statements for each party, its EDAs and its candidates by contributor. No individual was found to have exceeded the limit this year.

Registered Parties and Electoral District Associations

Donor eligibility was also reviewed. We found that all donations were by people who live in Nova Scotia.

All questions raised by ENS staff of either the official agent of an EDA or registered party were addressed to our satisfaction.

Candidates

After the May 30, 2017 general election, the reports of candidates' donations were posted on the ENS website. They are available online: <https://electionsnovascotia.ca/election-data/past-results/may-2017>

Registered Parties

By April 30th each year, the official agent of a registered party must file a disclosure statement showing political donations received by them during the previous calendar year. This statement includes the name and full residential address of each contributor and the total amount of their donations if \$200 or more. Due to privacy concerns, ENS reveals only the community name of the donor and not their full civic address.

There were five registered parties in Nova Scotia for the reporting period January 1 to December 31, 2017:

- Atlantica Party Association of Nova Scotia (Atlantica)
- Green Party of Nova Scotia (GPNS),
- Nova Scotia Liberal Party (NSLP),
- Nova Scotia New Democratic Party (NSNDP), and
- Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia (PC).

Each party filed their report before the April 30, 2018 deadline.

Electoral District Associations

In 2017, there were 51 electoral districts in Nova Scotia. The NSLP and the PC party each had 51 EDAs. The NSNDP had 41 EDAs. The Atlantica and Green parties had no EDAs.

With the endorsement of their party leader, each EDA must register with the Chief Electoral Officer. The information contained in their registration must be confirmed annually under Section 196(2) of the *Act*.

There were 143 registered EDAs in 2017. Of these, 128 or 90% filed *Financial Statements and Supporting Schedules* on or before the March 31 deadline. ENS staff followed up with the relevant official agents about incomplete or missing forms. The official agent is the person required by law to complete the annual filings and sign the declarations. If the reports from an EDA are not filed, a process to deregister them begins. As of the writing of this report, five EDAs had failed to file their annual reports.

Electoral District Association Reports

Registered Party	Number of EDA reports due	Number of EDA reports filed before the March 31, 2018 deadline	Number of EDA reports not filed as of June 1, 2018
Atlantica Party Association of Nova Scotia (Atlantica)	0	0	0
Green Party of Nova Scotia	0	0	0
Nova Scotia Liberal Party	51	51	0
Nova Scotia New Democratic Party	41	31	5
The Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia	51	46	0
Total	143	128	5

Candidate Loans

Subsection 230(1)(f) of the *Elections Act* requires the official agent of a candidate to provide to ENS a written loan agreement respecting all outstanding loans for their candidate's campaign. Loan agreements must be filed at the same time as their statement of political donations. The *Act* requires a report on the outstanding balance of a loan and any changes to the original loan contract annually. Loans must be paid within two years. In cases where a loan remains unpaid after two years, ENS employs all legal remedies available to restore candidate compliance with the *Act*.

PC candidate for Yarmouth Mitch Bonnar, had a loan outstanding at the end of 2017. The original loan of \$19,000 had a balance owing of \$10,412.02. This loan must be paid in full on or before June 29, 2019.

Links to Disclosure Reports (PDF)

Registered Party	Disclosure Report for Party	Disclosure Report for EDA ¹	Disclosure Report for Candidate ²
Atlantica Party Association of Nova Scotia (Atlantica)	Atlantica	N/A	N/A
Green Party of Nova Scotia (GPNS)	Green	N/A	N/A
Nova Scotia Liberal Party (NSLP)	Liberal	Liberal EDA	N/A
Nova Scotia New Democratic Party (NSNDP)	NDP	NDP EDA	N/A
The Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia (PC)	PC	PC EDA	N/A

Links to Disclosure Reports (Excel)

Registered Party	Disclosure Report for Party	Disclosure Report for EDA ¹	Disclosure Report for Candidate ²
Atlantica Party Association of Nova Scotia (Atlantica)	Atlantica	N/A	N/A
Green Party of Nova Scotia (GPNS)	Green	N/A	N/A
Nova Scotia Liberal Party (NSLP)	Liberal	Liberal EDA	N/A
Nova Scotia New Democratic Party (NSNDP)	NDP	NDP EDA	N/A
The Progressive Conservative Association of Nova Scotia (PC)	PC	PC EDA	N/A

1- Atlantica and Green did not have registered EDAs.

2- After the May 30, 2017 general election, the reports of candidates' donations were posted on the ENS website. They are available online: <https://electionsnovascotia.ca/election-data/past-results/may-2017>

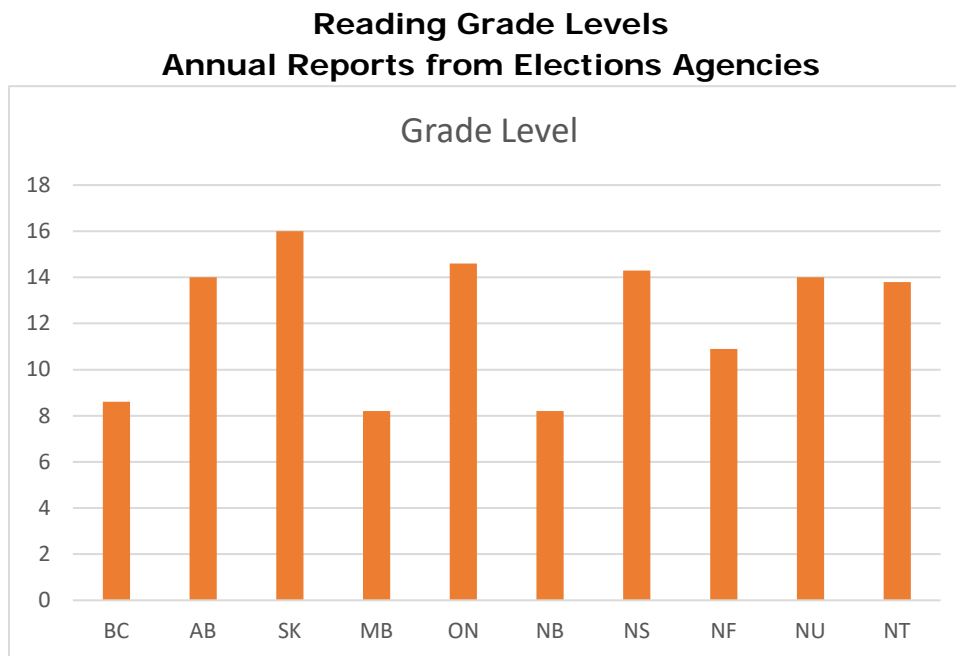
Readability Measure

It is a goal of ENS to improve the readability of all reports like this one.

ENS hired a readability consultant to review the “For Voters” area of the ENS website. This analysis was used to find out how easy it is to read and to understand what we write.

ENS is now using a grammar and spelling tool in MS Word to measure the reading grade level and reading ease of our written information. The reading grade level measures the years of schooling that would typically be needed to read and understand a given report. A reading grade level of 8.5 would mean a person needs more than grade eight education to completely understand the document. A level of 14.7 would mean a person needs high school and about three years of post-secondary education to understand what was written.

A review of annual reports from election management agencies across the country revealed our annual report required a higher reading grade level than most. A reading grade level of 14.3, placed our report at the top end of the range for all reports (8.2 to 14.8). This Political Donations Annual Report, which began at 15.4 now reads at grade level 9.7.



Refer to the website <http://nslegislature.ca/legc/index.htm> for an online version of the *Elections Act*