

**Please check against delivery:**

Thank you very much Minister Parrott.

It's a great day to be a Newfoundlander and Labradorian.

I am so incredibly proud to stand before you today — to speak to people across the province watching online and on television, to partners across Canada, and to investors around the world

...to share the news that so many of us have been waiting and working for.

Newfoundland and Labrador is officially back in the Oil & Gas Business.

Today Newfoundland and Labrador is entering a new frontier of offshore oil development. We are signing a formal legal agreement with Equinor and BP to open the path for construction and production of a new offshore oil project in Bay du Nord.

This will be the first deepwater oil project in the Canadian North Atlantic; one that will pave the way for other projects that will unlock what scientists believe are immense energy reserves in the Flemish Pass.

Others have been talking about Bay du Nord for over a decade. Well, I think we have been talking long enough. It's time to start doing something about it. That's why this is not just another MOU. This is not just another Framework agreement. It is not a rubber stamp or a hollow announcement.

It is real. Real jobs. And real revenues.

Through this agreement, two of the world's largest energy companies are committing to invest almost \$20 billion in capital and operating expenditures in our province over the 25-year life of this project...and unlocking thousands of new jobs...with the prospect of additional projects to follow.

Before I go further - I want to express my appreciation to our partners at Equinor and BP for partnering with us on this journey.

I am delighted to be joined by Equinor's Country Director Tore Løseth and BP Vice President Elsa Lassemblee-Leon as we sign this agreement and officially begin a new and exciting chapter in the story of our province's offshore. I want to thank them for the good faith and constructive approach to negotiations that helped make today possible.

I also want to offer a personal thank you to Prime Minister Mark Carney who has been a steadfast supporter of developing Bay du Nord from our very earliest conversations.

For a decade, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians were told that we CANNOT develop our offshore due to anti-oil policies such as the ideological emissions cap imposed by Prime Minister Carney's predecessor.

Well Prime Minister Carney has lifted that cap. And he ensured Ottawa assumed all obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

It is amazing what new leadership can accomplish. Where once the federal government told us what we CANNOT do. We now have a partner who is asking about what we CAN do. Enough of the CANNOT's. Now more than ever – we need leadership who thinks bigger and aims higher.

And I am reminded of the famous words of former Premier Brian Peckford – who was one of the architects of the original Atlantic Accord signed a little over 41 years ago when he said and I quote:

“Some day the sun will shine and HAVE NOT will be no more”

Well, today, my message to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador is this...

The sun IS shining on our offshore because 'CANNOT' will be no more.

I'm pleased to have Minister Thompson join us on behalf of the Prime Minister today. The next stage of this journey will be to officially designate Bay du Nord as a project of National Importance – and send a message to the world that Canada is truly back as an oil and gas superpower. And I look forward to conversations with the Prime Minister and Minister Thompson to get this over the finish line.

I can tell you the negotiations to get to this point were complex and not easy. I will let Tore speak from the standpoint of the company. But I am confident that our partners have an agreement that makes commercial sense for them.

I know that this is an agreement that makes sense for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. And I hope others are paying attention – because THIS is what it looks like to have an agreement that makes the people of our province the primary beneficiaries of our own resources.

In total – this agreement will result in Equinor and BP delivering \$3.25 billion in capital expenditure and at least \$15 billion in operating expenditure in our province over the lifecycle of this project.

The impact of these investments will be immense.

It starts with jobs. For a start, during the construction period, the Bay du Nord project will generate – at a guaranteed minimum - three million hours of fabrication employment.

Over the course of its 25-year life cycle – this project will guarantee 31 million person-hours of employment in offshore and onshore operations.

For the first time in the history of our province's offshore – we also have a guarantee for full life-of-field benefits – from the first day to the last – these jobs and investments will be centred right here.

And also, for the first time ever this project includes a guarantee for apprenticeships. A minimum of 10% of all fabrication skilled trades jobs and 15% of all onshore operations skilled trade jobs will go to apprentices – paving the way for a new generation of Newfoundland and Labrador Trades workers.

This work will be centred on building subsea components. A minimum of 95% of all subsea work will be completed right here in our province.

In addition, through this deal our province will have a guaranteed opportunity to competitively bid on topsides fabrication work.

And this project will also include 1.9 million hours of work in support and professional services. It will also include 100 new jobs at Bay du Nord's new Integrated Operations Centre to be located right here.

But this story is about more than just one project.

And what is particularly exciting to me – and this is new – as part of this agreement Equinor and BP are stepping up to unlock a whole new industry by contributing \$200 million to a Fabrication Fund that we will use to construct a new state of the art, large-scale 'Floating Dry Dock' at Bull Arm.

Building this dry dock will create hundreds of new jobs — long-term opportunities for our province's skilled trades workers. It will be proudly fabricated at Bull Arm, built by the hands and expertise of our own building trades workforce.

But this is about even more than those immediate jobs.

Because, when completed this Dry Dock will create new long-term capacity for vessel maintenance and repair and make Newfoundland and Labrador a national leader in this increasingly vital sector.

Here is why this is important. First – because the pent up national and global demand for dry dock services is real.

Wait times for commercial dry dock work in Canada are between 12-24 months. For Coast Guard and naval vessels, it is between 24-48 months. Today, too much of this urgent work is being diverted to locations outside of Canada. When completed – we will

bring this work home while becoming the hub of a new sector built around engineering and fabrication work.

It is also important – because this floating dry dock is central to our province's case to become a keystone of Canada's new Defence strategy. This is also something I have spoken about with the Prime Minister. In a dangerous world where Greenland, of all places, became a global hotspot, Canada's new National Defence Strategy must include investments in our Atlantic fleet. With Halifax already overcapacity – this dry dock will unlock our province as a new hub for National Defence investments.

Finally – and most importantly to me – this floating dry dock will allow us to break the boom-bust cycle of previous oil megaprojects.

Past offshore construction projects created a bonanza of short-term jobs – during major module fabrication – followed by mass layoffs when the work was complete.

By negotiating a \$200 million Fabrication fund into this deal – we are leveraging our partner's offshore investment to build something long-term and lasting. Long after every Bay du Nord module is built – this dry dock will still be employing Newfoundland and Labrador trades workers – as the heart of a brand-new maintenance and repair sector.

This means trades jobs today. This means trades jobs tomorrow. This means long-term jobs for the workers who need them.

After years of talking about jobs – Newfoundland and Labrador finally has an agreement that is delivering real jobs.

I am delighted that we are joined here by Bob Fiander and representatives of TradesNL who have been incredible partners with us as we work to build something new and something that can last...and I know that there are many trades workers out there who can't wait to get started.

Equinor and BP have also committed an additional \$100 million to support research and development in the province – which will be a shot in the arm of our tech sector

These investments will create massive new direct and indirect opportunities for professional services, technology, logistics and support businesses in Newfoundland and Labrador – and I am so delighted to have Charlene Johnson and members of EnergyNL with us as well...I know you will agree this is a great day for your members.

From the Government's standpoint – this is a gamechanger for our province's finances. Our long-term projections are that the project will generate over \$6 billion in direct revenue over the life of the project. The agreement also allows the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to take up to a 10% Equity stake in the project – an option which we are actively exploring. Even after accounting for borrowing costs - an equity

position would allow us to earn hundreds of millions of additional dollars in new revenue.

I finally want to highlight this point - Bay du Nord is not the finish line of our ambition in this sector. It is the starting line. Deepwater drilling is at the frontier of engineering...something that was not even feasible decades ago.

Over the past five years, over 70% of the world's new oil and gas reserves are coming from offshore sources and, in particular, from deepwater reserves. Well – Newfoundland and Labrador IS Canada's offshore oil sector. Right here at home.

As we build out this capacity, it will unlock other opportunities in our deepwater energy sector with billions more in benefits to be realized. And the investments our partners are delivering today will make it easier for the projects that follow. I am confident this is not the final chapter in our offshore story...instead it is the next chapter. I sometimes feel like we're just getting started...

Today is just our 125<sup>th</sup> day in office. We're moving fast. And we intend to continue.

To all who are gathered here today or watching at home – I hope you are as excited as I am.

The benefits of this agreement are real. But things are moving fast and the urgency is also real.

You can expect the Minister of Finance to account for the provincial investments related to this project in his upcoming budget. We will be doing our part – and investing real dollars – not “maybe dollars” to seize this opportunity.

We are on pace to begin construction and fabrication for Bay du Nord by the first quarter of 2027.

Equinor and BP are confident we can have first oil by 2031.

Decision makers in Ottawa are currently allocating Canada's new Defence Spending dollars – and deserve certainty that our new floating dry dock will be a reality.

By moving with urgency to get this agreement signed – we're not just telling investors that our province is back in the oil business. We are also telling our partners in the federal government that Newfoundland and Labrador is built for defence as well.

I will have more to say on that in the future. But today – is a day to celebrate. After years in limbo the future of our offshore oil sector is finally bright once again.

I've said it before and I hope you can feel it too...

...there is nothing quite like a comeback!

Thank you.