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Welcome Message
Honourable Rodney J. MacDonald
Minister of the Office of Health Promotion

I would like to welcome all participants to the first Atlantic Active Transportation Conference. This marks a substantial step in making this region a safe and healthy place in which to live, work and play.

Active transportation is a very important component of our province's commitment to active lifestyles, especially for youth. Youth are the key to providing a healthy future.

Two thirds of Nova Scotians are not active enough to enjoy health benefits. Active transportation in the form of walking, biking or using other modes of non-motorized travel for trips within or between communities, can make a difference. Making active choices can help us make strides in addressing many issues associated with chronic disease, obesity, climate change, air quality and traffic congestion.

We are pleased with the progress we have made thus far, but we have a long way to go. There are still many barriers impeding our community members from advancing the cause. Youth in particular, experience barriers in safe walking and cycling routes, and forms of active transportation such as skateboarding, in-line skating, scooting and BMX cycling.

Youth are an integral part of community action and it is only through working together that we can achieve the many benefits that active transportation can provide.

We believe in resolving these issues and I know that the people here today have the opportunity to become community leaders in establishing a framework for action.

Our government is committed to improving the health of Nova Scotians from many angles, including active transportation.

I thank you for your dedication and your presence here today. Together, we will make a difference.