



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Scotland Passes World-First Community Wealth Building Legislation – Centre for Local Prosperity says move creates clear opportunity for Atlantic Canada

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Atlantic Canada — The Scottish Parliament has passed the [Community Wealth Building \(Scotland\) Bill](#), the first national legislation in the world to embed Community Wealth Building into law.

The legislation requires public bodies to align procurement, investment, land use, and ownership decisions around keeping wealth circulating locally, strengthening community agency, and building long-term economic resilience, particularly in rural and regional communities.

“This is a significant moment,” said Justin Cantafio, Director of Policy at the Centre for Local Prosperity (CLP). “Scotland has made it clear that public money should deliver public benefit, and that communities should have real influence over how their local economies function.”

Community Wealth Building is a practical economic development framework that focuses on local ownership, strategic procurement, fair work, community-aligned investment, and long-term stewardship of land and assets. Rather than relying on external investment or trickle-down growth, it reshapes how everyday economic decisions are made so value stays in local and regional economies.

CLP says the legislation has direct relevance for Atlantic Canada. While rural communities across the region generate significant economic value through land, labour, fisheries, farms, healthcare, arts and culture, and public spending, much of that value flows out of the region. CLP’s import replacement research estimates that at least 40 percent of spending in Atlantic Canada leaves the regional economy, weakening local businesses and increasing vulnerability to external shocks.

“That level of leakage is not a failure of rural communities,” said Cantafio. “It reflects an economic system built around consolidation and extraction. Community Wealth Building offers a practical alternative.”

According to CLP, Atlantic Canada already has many of the conditions needed to apply a Community Wealth Building approach, including major public procurement, strong anchor institutions, and place-based sectors. Opportunities include using procurement as an economic development tool, rebuilding regional food and energy systems, supporting farm succession and land access, expanding inclusive ownership models such as cooperatives, and strengthening local control over essential infrastructure.



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“Scotland’s decision provides a proof point,” Cantafio said. “The question for Atlantic Canada is whether we continue with the status quo, or start intentionally designing our economies to retain wealth and build long-term resilience.”

The Centre for Local Prosperity works at the intersection of applied research, policy design, and on-the-ground implementation to support Community Wealth Building across Atlantic Canada. CLP collaborates with governments, municipalities, anchor institutions, Indigenous governments and organizations, Black-led community initiatives, cooperatives, and rural leaders to translate these ideas into practice.

To learn more about Community Wealth Building in Atlantic Canada, follow the [Centre for Local Prosperity](#) and subscribe to its [newsletter](#). Organizations interested in collaboration are encouraged to contact CLP directly.

Quotes:

“Scotland just proved something a lot of communities in Atlantic Canada have felt for a long time. There’s nothing inevitable about economic leakage. If wealth is leaving your community, it’s because the rules and systems are set up that way, and we can change the rules. Community Wealth Building is a practical framework for doing exactly that.” Justin Cantafio, Director of Policy, Centre for Local Prosperity

“Atlantic Canada is primed for this work. We already have strong anchor institutions, major public spending, and place-based sectors. The opportunity now is to align procurement, ownership, land, investment, and finance so that public dollars circulate locally and start compounding.” Justin Cantafio, Director of Policy, Centre for Local Prosperity

“If we’re serious about resilience, food and energy sovereignty, and a just transition, then we need less extraction and more local control. CWB is one of the most immediately usable strategies we have.” Justin Cantafio, Director of Policy, Centre for Local Prosperity

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