

tax. This put an average of \$450 back into the hands of seniors who needed it most. Starting January 1, 2014, that number will increase to 25,000. An additional 4,000 seniors will also have a portion of their income tax returned to them through a new provincial \$1,000 non-refundable Age Amount tax credit. In total, 29,000 seniors will receive more income tax relief.

- help low-income seniors stay in their home by investing \$650,000 to increase the maximum property tax rebate by \$200, bringing the total rebate up to \$800. Of the 15,000 seniors already receiving this rebate, 4,000 will benefit from the increase.
- invest an additional \$2 million to allow seniors to hire the community support they need to stay in their homes, including help with transportation, meal preparation, errands, and yard work. This will bring our two-year investment in home care to \$24 million.

Making Life Better for Students

Budget 2013 will:

- invest an additional \$6 million in the Graduate Retention Rebate Program for new graduates
- invest an additional \$4.6 million in student assistance, for a total of \$45 million
 - increase the loan-to-grant ratio to 60/40—\$1.9 million
 - increase the maximum weekly student allowance to \$180—\$2.7 million
- encourage our advanced education institutions to become more innovative and competitive—\$25 million (over three years)
- maintain Nova Scotia's student bursary program to keep tuition at or below the national average in 2013–2014—\$28 million

Making Life Better for Those Most in Need

Budget 2013 will:

- increase the personal allowance rates for income assistance beneficiaries by \$17. With this increase, personal-use allowances have increased by \$47 a month over the past four years for a total increase of more than 22 per cent.
- provide more Nova Scotians with safe, affordable housing options through the province's first ever Housing Strategy
- minimum wage is now linked to the national Consumer Price Index, increasing by 20 per cent over the past four years to \$10.30/hour, as of April 1, 2013
- provide an additional \$24,000 in funding for Women's Centres, to assist with the increase in operating costs
- provide \$3 million per year to work with vulnerable communities to better understand flooding and reduce the risk of damages