

ERBIN L. CROWELL

CANDIDATE STATEMENT

It has been an honor to serve on the board of NCBA CLUSA, and a privilege to work with my fellow directors and our committed staff as we have advanced our mission. I feel particularly fortunate to have served our association over the last few years as we advocated for the critical role of co-ops in helping our communities emerge from the pandemic, contributing to the work of the Cooperative Identity Advisory Group of the International Cooperative Alliance, and representing our association as we celebrated the launch of the International Year of Co-ops in New Delhi, India. I would welcome the opportunity to continue to serve as we advance our vision for a more inclusive economy where prosperity is shared more widely through cooperation.

NCBA CLUSA's strength lies in bringing together co-ops, credit unions and mutuals from across sectors, industries and communities to leverage our shared strength to address the challenges and opportunities before us. I began my career in a worker co-op where I first saw the potential of collaboration among worker, producer, grocery, and financial co-operatives domestically and internationally. This experience convinced me of the power of our model as a better way of doing business, leading me to pursue a Master of Management: Co-operatives and Credit Unions from Saint Mary's University in Nova Scotia on a scholarship from National Cooperative Bank (NCB). My subsequent work in cooperative development eventually led me to my current position as Executive Director of the Neighboring Food Co-op Association, and an adjunct professor with the International Centre for Co-operative Management at Saint Mary's University.

The ability of our movement to fulfill its potential lies in being able to connect with people from all backgrounds, to demonstrate our relevance to all aspects of their lives, and to empower them to envision a better future. It is in the space between our co-ops and the opportunities we have for greater collaboration within and across sectors and industries where we can see the possibility of an economy of shared prosperity, grounded in our shared cooperative identity—the values, principles and business model that sets us apart.

As a director, I have focused on collaborating with management and my board colleagues to stay focused on our vision and mission, advocate for laws and policies that reflect cooperative principles, and leverage our collective strength for shared impact. Thanks to our members, our dedicated directors and our committed staff, NCBA CLUSA has continued to grow in its impact. I believe the next few years will be critical to our future and it would be an honor to serve you on the Board of Directors as we move forward, together.