



Tabling of Documents

Joe Enook, MLA

Tununiq

February 21, 2017

*Correspondence to the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs
Concerning the Nutrition North Canada Program*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I wish to table today a copy of correspondence that I sent to the federal Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs on December 7, 2016, concerning the Nutrition North Canada Program.

I look forward to tabling a copy of the Minister's reply to me once I have received it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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Legislative Assembly of Nunavut



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Assemblée législative du Nunavut

Tabled Document 238-4(3)

Feb 21/17

December 7, 2016

The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
Terrasses de la Chaudière
10 Wellington, North Tower
Gatineau, Québec
K1A 0H4

Dear Dr. Bennett:

I am writing to you in my capacity as the Member of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut for the constituency of Tununiq, which includes the community of Pond Inlet.

During the recent fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly, I had the opportunity to speak in the House concerning the issue of your department's public engagement meetings on the Nutrition North Canada Program. I am attaching the relevant excerpt from *Hansard* for your review.

As you will note, I raised a number of concerns in my statement, including the fact that not a single member of the Nutrition North Canada Advisory Board attended the public engagement meeting that was held in Pond Inlet. I continue to be concerned that the Advisory Board still lacks a permanent Chair, and I continue to be concerned that the Board has not produced an annual report on its activities since the 2011-2012 time period.

In reviewing the formal *Mandate Letter* that you received from the Prime Minister, I note that one of your prescribed priorities is to "work with the Minister of Health to update and expand the Nutrition North Program, in consultation with Northern communities."

I recognize and appreciate your personal commitment to addressing issues related to food security and affordability in the North, and I urge you to give careful consideration to the issues and recommendations that I made in my statement.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,



Joe Enook, MLA
Tununiq

c.c. Member of Parliament for Nunavut
Senator for Nunavut
Minister of Health
Members of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut
Mayor of Pond Inlet
Auditor General of Canada
Vice-Chair, Nutrition North Canada Advisory Board

unusual take or reviews repeatedly as it was sometimes fabulously funny, as he would unexpectedly add unusual news items in his reviews. That kind of personal knowledge of the community and unique kind of recordings are sorely missed.

When Mr. Pearson was diagnosed with his illness and starting to suffer the effects as his body was becoming ravaged, I went to visit him about a month ago where I had a very candid conversation with him. I expressed my appreciation for his ongoing dedication and commitment to the community and for being in the forefront of many initiatives in our community. He took the acknowledgement to heart and expressed his happiness in hearing that tidbit from me.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues.

Further, in our conversation I referenced the news popping up throughout Canada. He was aware of my standing as a Liberal, and Mr. Pearson was an ardent Conservative. Nonetheless, I informed him that I really liked the surname Pearson he shared with the previous leader of the Liberals, who was the epitome of a Liberal and a leader in my opinion. He was taken aback, momentarily at a loss for words at that remark.

I was able to have good conversations with Mr. Pearson, without any partisan arguments as we had a common goal of furthering Iqaluit to being what it could be. I took great satisfaction from our conversations as he never belittled me for having different beliefs and instead tried to provide advice in all avenues.

It is very obvious that Mr. Pearson will leave a large void for those of us who befriended him and indeed to all of us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Tununiq, Mr. Enook.

Member's Statement 301 – 4(3): Nutrition North Canada Program

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to the residents of Pond Inlet and our fellow Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the Nutrition North Canada Program and to raise concerns about the public engagement meetings that are currently being held by its advisory board.

Mr. Speaker, as a number of my colleagues will recall, when the Nutrition North Canada Program was first introduced by the federal government five years ago, we invited the advisory board's former chairperson and departmental officials from the federal government to appear at a special televised meeting of the Full Caucus that was held in this Chamber. At that time, my colleagues and I raised a number of important concerns and questions. That was half a decade ago, and these concerns and questions remain unresolved.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government has announced that the Nutrition North Canada Advisory Board is holding public engagement meetings in a number of northern communities. One of these meetings was scheduled to take place in Pond Inlet late last month. However, I was extremely disappointed at what took place. Mr. Speaker, I found the way that the meeting was organized to be chaotic and undisciplined.

As the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Tununig, I was prepared to address the advisory board in order to welcome its members to the community and to raise concerns for their consideration regarding the Nutrition North Canada Program.

Mr. Speaker, although there are no fewer than half a dozen member of the advisory board, not a single one of them attended the public meeting in Pond Inlet.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for unanimous consent to my statement.

Speaker (interpretation): The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? I didn't hear any nays. Mr. Enook, please proceed.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I found it outrageous and unacceptable that not one member of the advisory board attended the public meeting. That would be like a committee of the House of Commons or this legislature holding a public meeting but only sending consultants and staff. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, it calls into question the extent to which the federal government takes the work of the advisory board seriously.

Mr. Speaker, it is important for the advisory board itself to be accountable, and I am disappointed that it has not produced an annual report on its own activities since the 2011-12 time period, almost five years ago.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the cost of living in Nunavut is the highest in the country. To take Pond Inlet as an example, recent figures released by our territorial statistics bureau indicate that the cost of a food basket in Pond Inlet jumped by over 5 percent between 2015 and 2016.

In May of 2013, I worked with a number of colleagues who are here today to pass a formal motion that called on the Auditor General of Canada to undertake a performance audit of the Nutrition North Canada Program.