



August 17, 2017

Hon. Monica Eil-Kanayuk, MLA
Minister of Economic Development and Transportation
Office of the Minister
Legislative Assembly Precinct
Iqaluit, NU
X0A 0H0

Tabled Document 345-4(3)

Sept 13/17

Dear Minister Eil-Kanayuk:

As you know, I have been a strong advocate for measures to support Inuit art and artists in Nunavut, which is why I am writing to express concerns that have been raised with me by a number of constituents concerning the new Iqaluit International Airport.

The importance of ensuring that genuine Inuit art made by Inuit artists is clearly identified as such has been long acknowledged. Consequently, you will understand why I was extremely disappointed to note that the retail outlet which has been granted the concession to operate in the new international airport is currently selling a number of items in its Inuit art showcase display which may not, in fact, be made by Inuit artists. It is my understanding that although a number of these items are reminiscent of the style of small sculpture for which many Inuit artists are renowned, they are, in fact, produced at a manufacturing facility in British Columbia. I believe that this retail practice is unethical and deceptive, and has no place in a government facility such as our new international airport.

As you aware, I have also raised concerns regarding other issues pertaining to the airport, and have noted that a number of matters have recently attracted public attention following the opening of the facility. I will raise these with you at the appropriate time and in the appropriate forum.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Okalik".

Paul Okalik, MLA
Iqaluit-Sinaa

c.c. President, Inuit Art Foundation
Chair, Board of Directors of the Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association
President, Board of Directors of Arctic Co-operatives Limited



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Building Nunavut Together
Nunavut iuqatigiingniq
Bâtir le Nunavut ensemble

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Department of Economic Development & Transportation
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Ministère du Développement économique et des Transports

Hon. Monica Ell-Kanayuk / ᐱᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕ

SEP 12 2017

TRANSLATION TO FOLLOW

Mr. Paul Okalik
MLA, Iqaluit – Sinaa
PO Box 1200
IQALUIT, NU X0A 0H0

Dear Mr. Okalik:

Thank you for your letter of August 17 regarding the retail concession at the Iqaluit airport. As the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, I am an advocate of Inuit art and artists, and I agree that it is important that their work not be confused with mass-produced items.

I understand that the retail operator, Northern Images, at the airport has recently labelled the community of origin for the genuine items they are selling, and have the mass-produced items in a separate display case. Although, it would be ideal to eliminate unauthentic mass-produced items all together but I believe that this a step in the right direction to prevent confusion amongst our art. In saying this, I do plan to address this with the cooperative, requesting them to be vigilant on this issue and to consider marking the display cases in a way that clearly highlights genuine Inuit art.

Again, thank you for your letter and bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours truly,

Monica Ell-Kanayuk
Minister

cc: Ms. Sherri Rowe, Deputy Minister, Department of Economic Development and Transportation

