

In addition to facilitating medical, court and other essential Government of Nunavut travel to and from the community, residents would have the opportunity to purchase seats on the service, which would enable them to have the same ability as other territorial residents to travel between Nunavut communities for such purposes as family reunification.

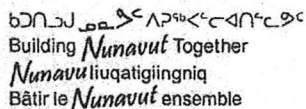
I anticipate raising this issue in the House at its next sitting and I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Allan Rumbolt', with a stylized, cursive script.

Allan Rumbolt, MLA
Hudson Bay

c.c. Premier of Nunavut
Chair, Regular Members' Caucus
Mayor and Council, Municipality of Sanikiluaq



Pivalliyayuliyikkut Ingilrayuliyitkullu

Ministre du Développement économique et des Transports
Minister of Economic Development and Transportation

SEP 09 2020

Dear Mr. Rumbolt,

Thank you for your letter of August 17, requesting regular routing between Sanikiluaq and Iqaluit. Recognizing that Sanikiluaq's is in a unique location, I asked my officials to see if there was any practical way to apply the federal funding towards establishing such a route.

This latest federal funding, as your letter points out, is intended to assist the provinces and territories in maintaining minimum essential access to remote communities. In assessing the need across Nunavut, we have defined essential access to include the following services:

- Scheduled medical travel;
- Timely transport of essential medical testing and supplies;
- Cargo services for food and basic supplies;
- Air ambulance (medivac) services;
- Government and corporate duty travel;
- Deployment of Rapid Response Team in the event COVID-19 is detected in a community, and;
- Search and rescue.

The normal routing for providing most of these services to Sanikiluaq is via Winnipeg. To ensure they are available, we have entered into arrangements with Calm Air to maintain this scheduled routing at a reduced frequency, similar to arrangements we have entered into for all our other communities.

Apart from Winnipeg travel, based on input received from other departments, it appears an average of 4-6 travellers per week move between Iqaluit and Sanikiluaq on either medical or duty travel. The most economical way to facilitate these levels of travel is through direct charters.

Keeping our transportation connections in place while minimizing risk of exposure has been one of the most demanding and expensive challenges the Government of Nunavut has had to meet in the face of COVID-19. Even with the federal contributions, the expense of maintaining the isolation hubs, and paying the air carriers to maintain essential routing regardless of demand has been difficult.

Johnnie Cookie, Mayor
Municipality of Sanikiluaq
mayor@sanikiluaq.ca



Sept 10, 2020

Dear Representatives,

We are writing to inquire about travel between Sanikiluaq and other Nunavut communities for Sanikiluarmiut. The unique situation of Sanikiluaq's geography has not received adequate attention to-date during the pandemic. With no connecting flights to other communities in Nunavut, Sanikiluaq has always been isolated from travel and activities in Nunavut, and policy development rarely considers this unique situation. During the pandemic this has been further exacerbated and continues to cause additional hardships. It is time for Sanikiluaq to be adequately included in Nunavut.

Recognizing that the lack of a direct flight to other Nunavut communities for Sanikiluaq is a larger problem, and given current funds available to support airline subsidies during the pandemic, we would like to suggest creating a regular (if infrequently) scheduled flight between Iqaluit and Sanikiluaq, e.g. once or twice a week via a King Air plane, Canadian North, or Air Inuit flight to provide service to Sanikiluaq like that afforded to every other Nunavut community. An existing charter company could be used in the interim until something can be scheduled e.g. with Canadian North.

Many industries and government agencies already expend extensive amounts on charters to Sanikiluaq, without allowing Sanikiluaq residents to join these flights and benefit from the contribution of government and industry funds to community travel. There are direct flights to many other Nunavut communities of a comparable size and population that are a similar distance to Sanikiluaq. It is time for Sanikiluaq to be provided services similar to those provided to every other Nunavut community.

COVID19 has been hard on all Nunavummiut; however, we feel little consideration has been given so far to the unique situation of Sanikiluaq and we have been effectively excluded from the Nunavut bubble. Implementing a flight connecting Sanikiluaq to Iqaluit would allow Sanikiluarmiut to be more effectively included in policies developed for Nunavut during the pandemic. We are not advocating for unnecessary travel, rather this approach would reduce the four-week isolation that is currently required for return travel. Even in regular times, travel is prohibitive requiring up to three or more days each way, considerable expense and time in accommodations outside of Nunavut.


A direct flight would allow substantial savings for Sanikiluaq projects, and is critical during pandemic and regular times so that essential workers, government, justice, construction, students and bereavement travel could be possible. The current two-week isolation time is prohibitive to bringing in contractors and service providers that would require isolation both ways, and this would allow drawing on Nunavut based service providers. Bringing in outside workers with exceptions rather than bringing in essential workers from within Nunavut further provides additional health risks of exposure to COVID for Sanikiluaq that could be reduced with a within-

Nunavut flight. Even some health care services may be possible for Sanikiluaq residents in Iqaluit and made accessible without requiring leaving Nunavut through this option. The isolation on return travel from medical services in Winnipeg that could otherwise be provided in Iqaluit are also expensive for the Government of Nunavut and this could be invested in the direct flight option connecting Sanikiluaq to Nunavut for non-emergency health services available in Iqaluit. In the future, this flight could also be instrumental in transporting COVID test swabs to Iqaluit for analysis.

In summary, policies need to be implemented to consider the unique needs of Sanikiluaq during the pandemic, and beyond. A direct flight option connecting Sanikiluaq to Iqaluit is long overdue and is particularly urgent during the pandemic, funds are available to subsidize this essential service and it makes economic sense to do so. A direct flight will allow Sanikiluaq to be more effectively included in Nunavut services and policies during this critical time, help reduce the potential for exposure to Sanikiluaq residents, and facilitate community resilience and delivery of essential services and projects as a functioning part of Nunavut.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,


Johnnie Cooke, Mayor
Municipality of Sanikiluaq

CC:

Mr. Allan Rumbolt, MLA for Hudson Bay
The Honorable Joe Savikataaq, Premier of Nunavut
The Honorable George Hickes, Minister of Health, GN
The Honorable Lorne Kusugak, Minister of Community and Government Services, GN
The Honorable David Akeeagok, Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, GN
Dr. Michael Patterson, Chief Public Health Officer, Government of Nunavut
The Honorable Marc Garneau, Minister of Transport, Government of Canada
Mr. Michael Keenan, Deputy Minister of Transport, Government of Canada
The Honorable Catherine McKenna, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities
Ms. Kelly Gillis, Deputy Minister, Dept. of Infrastructure and Communities
Ms Mumilaaq Qaqqaq, Member of Parliament, Nunavut
Mr Natan Obed, President, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
Ms. Aluki Kotierk, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Mr. P.J. Akeeagok, President, Qikiqtani Inuit Association
The Honorable Charlie Watt, President, Makivik Corporation
Mr. Pita Aatami, President, Air Inuit
Mr. Johnny Adams, Executive Chairman, Canadian North
Mr. Chris Avery, President & CEO, Canadian North

Nunavut Maligaliurvia
Assemblée législative du Nunavut

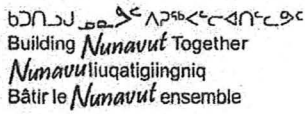
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Minister of Economic Development and Transportation

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