YOUR CHURCH LETTERHEAD

The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, Date:

Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)

1650 Yonge Street (Main Office)

Suite 103 Toronto, Ontario M4T 2A2

Dear Minister Bennett,

Congratulations on the Liberal government’s recent announcement of $1.4 billion in spending towards infrastructure to provide clean water to First Nations’ communities across the country.

Pikangikum, an Ojibway First Nation community in Northern Ontario, is of special interest to me. The issues faced by the people of Pikangikum are not limited to access to clean water, where the complexity and interconnectedness of social, health, infrastructure, economic and governance deficits have contributed to an overwhelming sense of despair.

My own awareness of the specifics surrounding this one community is based on reports received from the Pikangikum Working Group and from the Anglican Church of Canada’s PWRDF program. Both are committed to bettering the lives of families living in Pikangikum, an area overseen by your regional DG Mauricette Howlet.

I would remind you that in Pikangikum:

* 92%+ of houses have no, or inadequate, indoor plumbing.
* The wastewater outflow is upstream from the existing intake points.
* Electrical power for the community is limited to inefficient diesel generators.
* Many houses are overcrowded with up to eighteen people.
* The suicide rate is reportedly thirty-six times the national average.
* Pikangikum has been identified as having the highest per capita suicide rate in the world.
* The community’s youth are particularly vulnerable.

We can and must do better for this community and others like it. Consequently, I ask that the following issues be addressed as soon as possible:

* Moving the wastewater lagoon from the community to a safer location.
* Providing all Pikangikum residents with secure water and wastewater services for their homes. (retrofitting the houses appropriately)
* Ensuring sustained availability to clean water by facilitating direct access to the power grid.
* Providing the resources needed to address the mental health and social welfare of the residents.

Please note that we are committed to raising both awareness and funds for Pikangikum through the Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF), an agency of the Anglican Church of Canada. *(Charitable no. 8664 34640 RR0001)*

I look forward to your response and most especially to hearing of a compassionate and swift response to the pressing needs of the Pikangikum community.

Yours sincerely,

Please reply to:

cc. The Honourable Jane Philpott Minister of Health;

cc. The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos Minister of Families, Children and Social Development

YOUR CHURCH LETTERHEAD

The Honourable Jane Philpott Date:

Minister of Health

6060 Main Street

Stouffville, Ontario L4A 1B8

Dear Minister Philpott,

I was pleased to learn of the Liberal government’s recent announcement of $1.4 billion in spending towards infrastructure to provide clean water to First Nations’ communities across the country.

Pikangikum, an Ojibway First Nation community in Northern Ontario, is of special interest to me. The issues faced by the people of Pikangikum are not limited to access to clean water, where the complexity and interconnectedness of social, health, infrastructure, economic and governance deficits have contributed to an overwhelming sense of despair.

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Yours sincerely,

Please reply to:

cc. The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)

cc. The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos Minister of Families, Children and Social Development

YOUR CHURCH LETTERHEAD

The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos Date

Minister of Families, Children and Social Development

275 Charest Blvd East

Québec, Quebec G1K 3G8

Dear Minister Duclos,

I was pleased to learn of the Liberal government’s recent announcement of $1.4 billion in spending towards infrastructure to provide clean water to First Nations’ communities across the country.

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cc. The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)