

Premier Caroline Cochrane
Government of the Northwest Territories
Office of the Premier
2nd Floor Legislative Assembly
PO BOX 1320 | C. P. 1320
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

September 11, 2021

Dear Premier Cochrane,

Thank you for your letter of September 2 detailing the complex challenges facing the Northwest Territories. In October 2018, I had the honour of visiting Inuvik and Yellowknife with a House of Commons committee. We met with seventeen groups, including Inuit leaders, who shared their unique perspectives on the future of the Arctic.

I'm pleased to share with you my vision for Northern Canada, one that respects and supports Northerners, while building the critical infrastructure needed to truly realize the potential of the Canadian North.

Through Canada's Recovery Plan, a Conservative government will be ready to support the unique economic, housing, infrastructure and health needs of the Northwest Territories.

To address Northwest Territories housing and affordability challenges, we will support doubling the residency deduction, which has not increased since 2016, to recognize the rising cost of living in the North. We will also implement a Northern Housing Strategy built on providing the territories with their fair shares of federal housing funding; ensuring that funding is stable and predictable; and working with Indigenous groups including the Inuit, and with resource companies investing in the North, to ensure that housing gets built.

As Prime Minister, I will meet with the Premiers within the first 100 days of forming government to propose a new health agreement with the provinces and territories that boosts the annual growth rate of the Canada health transfer to at least six per cent. This will inject nearly \$60 billion into provincial and territorial health care systems across the country over the next ten years. We will also improve Nutrition North so that it achieves the goal of ensuring that Northerners have access to affordable healthy food.

My government will complete devolution, beginning by allowing the territories to set their borrowing limits instead of Ottawa arbitrarily setting limits.

On infrastructure, Canada's Conservatives have a vision for a Canadian north that is connected to the rest of our country and the world. Realizing the potential of Canada's North - and the jobs and opportunity for Northerners that will come with it - requires a generational investment in infrastructure.

We will ensure that the territories receive their fair share of infrastructure funding by reserving a funding envelope for them that accounts for the high construction costs in the North. We will address the Northern infrastructure gap in housing, telecommunications, transportation, energy, and climate change preparedness. Our plan for Northern infrastructure includes:

- The Grays Bay Port Road Project, connecting Nunavut and the Northwest Territories, via
 - A 230-kilometre all-weather trunk road connecting a port at Grays Bay to an existing ice road from Yellowknife via the Northwest Territories diamond mines; and
 - The only deep-water port on the Northwest Passage to (seasonally) connect the national highway system.
- Completing the Tuktoyaktuk road, and converting the town's current harbour into a deep water port. Having a deep water port in Tuktoyaktuk will allow the town to benefit from natural resource exploration, extraction, and tourism.
- Pursuing an Arctic Gateway policy across the Canadian North.
- Connecting all of Canada to high-speed Internet by 2025.

Canada's Conservatives recognize the enormous economic potential of resource extraction in the Northwest Territories. We will partner with your government and with Indigenous leaders to ensure decisions about economic development in the North will be made by Northerners, not by Ottawa; that projects are held to world-leading environmental standards; and that Indigenous communities are empowered to pursue economic opportunities and benefit from the development of resources on their traditional territories.

In addition, a Conservative government will give the Northwest Territories its fair share of federal training funds to support skills training and ensure Northerners are ready to step into good, well-paying jobs. We will work with governments and communities in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region to develop community-based marine fisheries, which will help create employment and fight local and regional food insecurity.

Furthermore, a Conservative government will be fully committed to reconciliation. Recent reports, including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, have identified significant gaps in opportunity and outcome between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Canada's Conservatives will focus our efforts on durable solutions that make a real and meaningful impact on the quality of life of First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples, including working with the government of the Northwest Territories to advance land claims and self-government agreements.

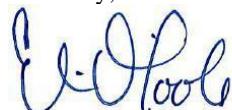
We also know that the impacts of climate change are felt particularly harshly by those in the North. We have committed to devising and implementing a national climate adaptation strategy and incorporating a mitigation and adaptation lens to the government's infrastructure investments. These, combined with our commitment to provide the territories with their fair share of infrastructure funding, will secure the environmental future of our Northern territories.

In April, Canada's Conservatives released a detailed plan to meet our Paris climate commitment and reduce emissions by 2030, but without driving up the cost of living in Northern Canada. We will cancel the Liberals' carbon tax that is having a disproportionately negative impact on Northerners, and instead empower Canadians to make greener choices by working with the Northwest Territories to implement an innovative, national, Personal Low Carbon Savings Account. This will put a price on carbon for consumers without one penny going to the government. It will be completely transparent and engage consumers in the process of building a lower carbon future.

I believe our best days are ahead of us. When the Northwest Territories thrive, the rest of Canada does too.

Thank you for bringing these issues to my attention. I have enclosed a copy of the chapter from Canada's Recovery Plan titled, "A Detailed Plan to Secure the North." I look forward to working together to secure the future for the Northwest Territories.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Erin O'Toole
Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada