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March 16 2020

Honourable Dan Vandal  
Minister of Northern Affairs  
House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario,  
Canada K1A 0A6

Letter of Support for COVID -19 - A Northern Food Security Monitoring and Contingency Planning Solution – All parties need to monitor food, medical supplies & fuel on a weekly basis

Dear Minister Vandal,

The Yellowknives Dene First Nation supports a Northern Food Security Monitoring and Contingency Planning Solution in light of the COVID – 19 virus. Northern Indigenous communities are at greater risk when it comes to COVID-19 due to overcrowded housing, food insecurity and poverty linked to poor health outcomes.

There needs to be an independent team to review current supply chains, examine emergency options and have the weight of the government and the Department of National Defence to ensure our children and families get medical care, food and fuel. In short, we do not trust private sector firms like the North West Company to manage a process in secrecy. Too many lives are at stake. For years we have questioned why the food prices are so high? With vertical integration we believe huge logistical / transportation margins are partially responsible. The Retail store may only make 5% margin but the logistics company is making 120%. No one knows who does what and at what cost. We believe the Northern Food Program is essential and could do much great good but you are being abused by monopolies. What happens if the Winnipeg warehouse is shut down? What happens if 15% of pilots are sick? What happens if we need to evacuate a sick elder and the current provider is out of business?

In partnership with **IndigenousTech.ai** (PSAB compliant Project Management & Coding) and the other partners such as **Microsoft** (Protected B Cloud and Artificial Intelligence), **BlackBerry** (Secure Communications) and **D&B** (Business Credit Bureau), the YKDFN believes this solution and our involvement with Northern Communities will be critical in successfully collecting actionable and accurate data. Communities and Canada need evidence-based decision making related to logistics and delivery infrastructure challenges.

Mahsi Cho (Thank you)

Jason Snaggs,  
CEO, Yellowknives Dene First Nation