



THE PREMIER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

AUG 18 2015

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada
1204 – 130 ALBERT STREET
OTTAWA ON K1P 5G4

Mr. Thomas Mulcair
Leader of the Official Opposition
New Democratic Party of Canada
300 – 279 LAURIER WEST
OTTAWA ON K1P 5J9

Mr. Justin Trudeau
Leader of the Liberal Party
Liberal Party of Canada
350 ALBERTA STREET, SUITE 920
OTTAWA ON K1P 6M8

Ms. Elizabeth May
Leader of the Green Party of Canada
PO BOX 997, STATION B
OTTAWA ON K1P 5R1

Dear Sirs/Madam:

Our government looks forward to strengthening its role as a contributing and vital member of Confederation, particularly through the balanced and responsible development of the Northwest Territories (NWT) substantial mineral, energy and hydro resources that will transform the economy of the territory, creating opportunities for our residents and contributing to national prosperity. Investment in transportation, technology, housing and energy infrastructure by the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), Canada and our partners will be key to fully realizing the economic potential and maximizing the human capacity that resides here in the NWT.

Cooperation and partnership are essential parts of the Northern character and we continue to value our partnership with the Government of Canada in helping to realize the full potential of the Northwest Territories and its people. On behalf of the residents of the Northwest Territories, I am writing to you as leaders of your respective parties to solicit your party's position on issues critical to the continued creation of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous NWT. Your answers to the questions that

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follow, will help NWT voters better understand your party's views on the North and positions on important policy matters. We look forward to your reply.

1. Responsible development of the NWT's rich reserves of natural resources would create a strong, prosperous NWT and help supply the energy needs of consumers, businesses and industries in southern Canada. What actions would your government take to facilitate and support the responsible development of currently stranded NWT resources and ensure Northerners are able to meaningfully participate in and enjoy the benefits of sustainable economic development?
2. The NWT is one of the only jurisdictions in Canada currently facing a declining population, threatening the sustainability of many Northern communities and making it difficult to encourage robust economic growth and the development of a prosperous territory able to provide for its most vulnerable citizens. What actions would your government take to support GNWT efforts to grow the NWT population, such as tax measures recognizing the high cost of living or measures to encourage foreign investment and immigration to the NWT?
3. NWT residents and businesses face some of the highest energy costs in the country, driving up the cost of living and creating obstacles to economic growth for new and growing businesses, as well as established industries. Will your government be prepared to make investments in energy sustainability in the NWT in partnership with the GNWT, including investments in expanded power grids connected to the national grid, and support for more affordable and environmentally friendly local power generation options?
4. Lack of transportation infrastructure continues to limit responsible resource development in the NWT and contribute to the high cost of living for our residents. What investments would your government be prepared to make, in partnership with the GNWT, in new and improved road, air, marine and rail transportation infrastructure to better link our residents to each other and the rest of Canada, promote sustainable communities, reduce living costs and support economic growth of our territory?
5. After decades of negotiation, responsibility for public land, water and resources in the NWT was transferred to the GNWT, giving Northerners a greater say in decisions affecting their own economy and future and promoting increased certainty around land use and responsible resource development. What plans would your government have for furthering Northern self-determination by completing the devolution of authority for the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, providing responsibility for Northern board appointments, negotiating administration over offshore oil and gas resources , and finalizing and implementing outstanding land claim and self-government agreements?

6. Since the 1940's the Mackenzie Delta region has warmed by over 3° Celsius and the southern part of the territory by 2° C. This is some of the fastest warming of any region in the world and has led to thawing permafrost, shorter winter road seasons, coastal erosion, new forest pests, fires and drought. The exponential impacts of climate change on the North combines with factors like the high cost of energy and limited infrastructure to present challenges to the sustainability of rural and remote Northern communities. What steps would your government take to address climate change while at the same time avoiding increases in the already high cost of living for Northerners or creating unintended barriers to sustainable Northern economic development?

7. Access to adequate, suitable and affordable housing is of great importance to our territory. Lack of appropriate housing not only limits the potential of the individual, but it also threatens the economic development, labour market participation, and sovereignty of our communities and country. The once strong housing partnership between NWT and Canada created a valuable social housing stock that supported the aspirations of NWT residents, sovereignty of northern areas and economic and resource development. The NWT, already spending several times more on housing in relation to overall government expenditures than the national average, faces the prospect of assuming even more of the financial burden as social housing operating agreements expire. How would your government propose to address these serious housing challenges head-on through strong collaboration and continued, long-term, predictable and flexible federal funding?


By working together with our partners, the GNWT has made major strides in advancing northern governance and the northern economy. We are doing more than addressing our government's strategic priorities. We are responding to the needs and values of the people of the NWT and we are working with our federal and Aboriginal government partners on our common priorities.

The GNWT recognizes the power of partnerships with the federal government and also with Aboriginal governments, industry and communities. We are anxious to learn how you see our government's relationship with the incoming federal government unfolding in the years ahead.

Your considered response is important to the future of the NWT, and to all of Canada. Written answers to the questions we have posed will further inform NWT residents and facilitate their decision-making regarding the upcoming election. This letter, as well as your responses to it received by September 18, 2015, will be made public on the GNWT website.

Thank you for your attention to this during a busy campaign period.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert R. McLeod." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a distinct "L" at the end.

Robert R. McLeod