

Member's Statement on Territorial Funding

Mr. Speaker, on Monday the Minister of Finance took delivery of report on the Territorial Formula Financing produced by the Expert Panel mandated to review these programs. On Monday the Minister said he was going to review the report. The people of Canada's North need immediate changes to how their governments are financed.

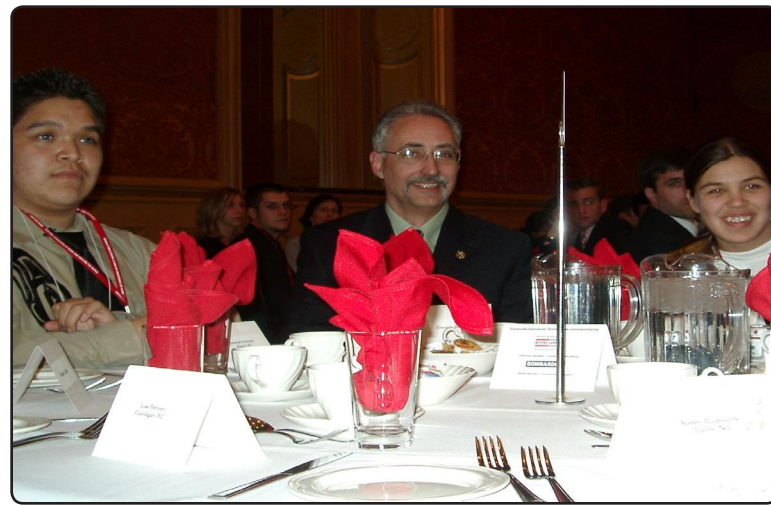
Importantly, the report calls for a reduction in the amount Ottawa claws back from the territories own source revenue each year. It also calls for resource revenues to be excluded from the calculation of own source revenues.

However, I cannot agree with the reports recommendation for the continuation of using population as the basis for determining territorial funding. In the submission from the three territories they called this approach inadequate and inappropriate.

I hope the Minister will heed the views of the three territories when he reviews this report

The Territories are only asking for a fair shake from Ottawa that will allow them to achieve their great promise.

Thank you Mr. Speaker



Dennis has dinner on Parliament Hill with NWT participants in the Experience Canada Program

NDP Leader coming to NWT

For the third time in a little over a year, Jack Layton, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada will be visiting the Northwest Territories.

Jack will be in Yellowknife from July 21st until the 23rd He will then be travelling to Fort Simpson. On July 31st Jack will be attending the Dene Assembly in Hay River.

While in Yellowknife, Jack will be attending the celebration of the Royal Canadian Legion's 80th Anniversary, meeting Northerners at a barbeque and joining the Yellowknifer's Fishin' Technician Mike Bryant.

Jack will also be visiting the communities of Fort Simpson and Nahanni Butte.

Keep watching for more details on Jack's visit.



Dennis address the torch lighting ceremony for the Canada Games, April 6th. The Games will be held in Whitehorse starting February 24, 2007. The ceremony was held on Parliament Hill before the torch began its journey to the North Pole

Your thoughts

I want to hear back from you. If you have any comments or concerns you would like me to be aware of please write them down and mail them to my Ottawa office. Remember, letters to your MP's Parliament Hill office do not need a stamp.

DENNIS BEVINGTON, MP WESTERN ARCTIC • 1-800-661-0802

DENNIS BEVINGTON

Member of Parliament • Western Arctic

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Message from Dennis

Dear friend,

It's hard to believe that January 23rd was only a few months ago, it seems much longer. These last few months have been one of the busiest and most exciting times in my life. It makes me so proud and happy to represent the people of the Northwest Territories in the House of Commons.

During this session much was accomplished. Along with my colleagues in the NDP Environment Caucus we unveiled our five point Agenda for a Green Canada. The Agenda includes initiatives for Greener Homes, Communities, Transportation, Industry, Canada and the World. These initiatives will create thousands of jobs and more than meet Canada's Kyoto commitments.

Bill C-2 the *Federal Accountability Act* was passed by the House and is now off to the Senate. C-2 contains many of the ethics initiatives that Ed Broadbent brought forward during the last Parliament.

This summer I'll be travelling through out the NWT and look forward to meet with as many constituents as possible. It is important for me to hear everyone's concerns so that I can bring them up in the House of Commons.

I hope everyone has a great summer.

Dennis

"It was really important to me to begin serving the people of the Western Arctic as soon as possible, because of this one of the first things I did after getting elected was to have my Constituency Office open."

- Dennis Bevington, MP Western Arctic



Dennis serves up some cake during the Grand Opening of his new Constituency Office in the Donald Cooper Building in Yellowknife.

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During International Women's Week Dennis hosted a breakfast to recognize the contributions women have made to the North.

Mackenzie Valley Gas Pipeline

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about an important issue in my constituency in the north.

Today the Mackenzie gas pipeline is in front of two federal assessment panels. The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development met with leaders from the Northwest Territories last week and indicated that his government was willing to support this project without the unanimous approval of northern aboriginal leaders and the results of the two assessment panels.

How can the minister take such a stand before the assessments have been completed and aboriginal leaders have had their input?

Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development are very interested in providing economic development to the north. Clearly, we are interested in receiving unanimity, if possible, but we are not going to let that be a barrier to providing economic value to the northerners that need it the most.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Western Arctic, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is so much the minister can do for our communities, for the working families, and for aboriginal people. We need to work with all people to prepare the ground for such an important project.

The minister needs to take immediate action to deal with the Deh Cho land claims, financing the protected areas strategy, supporting land use plans, negotiating resource revenue sharing, and establishing a cumulative environmental impact assessment process.

Will the minister commit to work with the people of the north on these issues immediately?

Mr. Rod Bruinooge (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development has committed to the people of the north including the Deh Cho. In fact, his first trip was throughout the north. He met with these groups and he has ensured all parties that he is going to be working with all stakeholders to provide the best solution to this situation.

In the House

Energide

Questioned the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources as to why the Conservatives have been cooking the books to support their ending of vital elements of this program.

The Conservatives have been arguing that half of the money spent for energy retrofits is going to administration. They argue that the energy audits conducted for program accountability are administration and a waste of time.

High Gas Prices

These price increases are a symptom of a much larger disease. The disease is the fact that inexpensive, easy to access fossil fuels are beginning to run out at a time when demand continues to increase. We must address the twin facts that new sources of energy need to be developed now and the demand for fossil fuels needs to be reduced.

What is needed is a national energy strategy that is based on the twin pillars of conservation and the development of new energy sources.

Northern Residents Tax Deduction

In the late 1980s Ottawa brought in the Northern Residents Tax Deduction, to deal with the high cost of living in the North and, when first introduced, did much to right the balance.

However, it has fallen behind. With continuously rising costs of living and 13 years of Liberal inaction, it no longer provides Northerners with the relief they deserve. Since 1989 the consumer price index for Yellowknife has gone up by about 50% and is higher in smaller communities in the North.

I ask the government to raise the residency portion of the deduction by 50% and to further index increases to keep pace with the ever increasing costs. Recently the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories voted unanimously to ask Parliament to increase the deduction.

I ask the government to heed the voice of northerners and increase this deduction.



Dennis gives voice to Northern issues in the House of Commons

Highlights from my response to the throne speech

Political Development

The people of the Northwest Territories need action from Ottawa on their political development. The law outlining the authorities of the Government of the Northwest Territories is outdated but this is just the tip of the iceberg. For too many years the federal government has dragged its heels in the negotiations of self-government and land claims. Further, for those claims that have been settled, Ottawa has failed to properly implement them.

Until Ottawa settles all outstanding claims, truly recognizes the inherent right to Aboriginal self-government and the charter right of public government, the political development of the NWT will remain stagnant.

Resource Development

After the lack of strategic direction provided by the federal government in the development of our diamonds, Northerners are concerned about how future resource development will be handled by the federal government. We are all aware of the ongoing hearings into the Mackenzie Valley natural gas pipeline. The process is taking too narrow a focus on the scope and impact of the development. What is needed here is a strategic environmental assessment of all the development that will flow from a major gas industry in the

Mackenzie Valley.

Territorial Financing

The Northwest Territories needs a fair financing agreement with Canada. Right now the federal government claws back nearly every cent that the NWT raises. This means that the economic development of the NWT benefits us very little. There are increased costs due to economic development but without the benefit of increased revenue from this development, the reality is increasing funding shortfalls for essential programs such as education, health care, municipal infrastructure and social housing.

I called on the Minister of Finance to fund the North based upon the real cost of programs and service delivery.

Northern Resident's Tax Deduction

The high cost of living is a reality for Northerners, because of this I asked the Minister of Finance to increase the Northern Residents Tax Deduction by 50% and to index the deduction to the consumer price index for the north.

Climate Change

On the issue of climate change, the North is already experiencing changes in the climate, we see evidence of this by observing wildlife, such as the declining numbers of caribou.

NDP only party with environment plan

Bevington & NDP Environment caucus launch plan

This June the New Democratic Party launched its Green Agenda for Canada; a five point set of realistic proposals that will conserve energy, attract green investment, reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 209 megatonnes and create close to 600,000 jobs with a total annual cost to the Federal government of \$940 million.

The agenda focuses on five key areas:

- Greener Homes;
- Greener Communities;
- Greener Transportation;
- Greener Industry; and
- Greener Canada and World

"While Northerners continue to wait for the Conservative government to scratch together the 'made in Canada' solution promised months ago, the NDP is taking action," said Dennis Bevington the NDP's Energy Critic. Bevington added. "This government has no plan to invest in a green economy and their inaction is allowing other nations to bypass Canada on the road to providing productive, environmentally sustainable Northern communities."

In a speech June 7th Conservative Environment Minister Rona Ambrose said that those who are fighting for real action on climate change in this country are driven by 'self-serving politics' and 'self righteousness'. "Its time that this minister spot wasting time attacking the people who care about this issue and start attacking the issue itself", said NDP Environment Critic Nathan Cullen. Mr. Cullen later in June called for the Minister's resignation, but the Conservatives and Liberals teamed up to use procedural tricks to block the motion.

"For 12 years, while the Liberals did nothing to stop rising pollution, the Conservatives said they had a better plan. Unfortunately, Canadians are learning that their plan was just hot air," said NDP Leader Jack Layton. "This government has no plan to deal with rising pollution in our air and water or to invest in a green economy and their inaction has become an international embarrassment."

"Northerners are the first Canadians to feel the affects of Climate Change," said Bevington. "We have seen dramatic changes to our weather with warmer winters and summers. These changes are also having serious impacts on our wildlife such as polar bears and caribou. We can't wait any longer for action."