

## **NWT Boards ‘On Hold’ While Minister Fails to Make Timely Appointments**

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### **For Immediate Release**

**Yellowknife** - Despite recommendations from two federal reports, the minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development has failed to make timely Northern appointments to the numerous regulatory boards across the Northwest Territories.

Both the 2008 McCrank Report “Road to Improvement: The Review of the Regulatory Systems Across the North,” and the 2010 Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Report “Northerners’ Perspectives for Prosperity,” have clear recommendations for timely board appointments.

“Why won’t the government respect the importance of timely action on these appointments?” Asked Western Arctic MP Dennis Bevington.

Bevington also voiced concerns over the length of time associated with these board appointments and the inherent unfairness to the lives and careers of the individuals appointed.

He also pointed out the Gwichin Renewable Resource Board as an example.

“The GRRB has only had 4 regular members out of 12 since 2010, which means this board has had no quorum and cannot function or make legal binding decisions,” explained Bevington.

Eleven of the NWT’s thirteen Regulatory and Land Claim boards have vacancies.

“The Harper government continues to fail in its responsibilities to ensure these boards can operate fully and effectively. Their inaction is fulfilling their own arguments that the regulatory process is flawed,” stated Bevington.

Over the next six months, many of the current positions on the Boards are due for renewal or replacement. “This government needs to be pro-active on this issue, and these appointments need to be dealt with in a timely fashion,” Bevington concluded.

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## **Backgrounder**

Two federal reports have called for timely ministerial board appointments. Neil McCrank's 2008 Report, a review of the regulatory systems across Canada's North, and the 2010 report from the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, which received support from all political parties in the 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament.

Here are the two recommendations as worded in both reports:

**Recommendation #15** – “The office of the minister of INAC should establish a process that would anticipate board appointments and ensure that the appointments are timely.” (McCrank Report, 2008)

**Recommendation # 29** – “That the Government of Canada, to minimize the risk of failing to meet quorum for regulatory boards, stagger appointments and extend the term of existing board members, where possible, until new appointments can be made. As well, the Government's should seek further enhancements to streamline the nomination and appointment process, to the satisfaction of all parties.” (Report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, 2010)

## **SOURCES:**

Northerners' Perspectives For Prosperity

Report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, December 2010

Road To Improvement: “The Review Of The Regulatory Systems Across The North.”

By: Neil McCrank, Minister's Special Representative, May 2008

Status of Ministerial Appointments. June 1, 2011