

# Dennis Bevington

## Member of Parliament Western Arctic

Winter 2011 Community Newsletter



Dear friends,  
Parliament has now resumed in this New Year, and without a doubt the big question remains the 2011 Federal Budget. Due in front of Parliament in March, this document will likely determine whether the country is in its next Federal Election, or if the Conservative Government will last through to summertime. The Government says it does not believe the economy should be upset by an election, that the country is still recovering from the recession and they want Parliament to focus there. The NDP agrees that there is important work to do for people in the economy, and I support this fully. But it is necessary to do something in the budget to address the real problems people have in coping with rapidly increasing costs, especially with energy, which northerners only know so well.

Seniors need protection from these costs; we want to see the Guaranteed Income Supplement raised to take our elders out of poverty. Families need help; by lowering the tax on home heating and by reinstating the eco energy program, they can see their costs going down.

Health care needs to be improved and northerners know this very well. We need more doctors and health professionals throughout northern Canada.

I am still pushing this government to raise the Northern Residents Tax Deduction. Our recent Northern Development Report unanimously adopted by all the parties in the House of Commons made a strong pitch for this as well.

There are many things this government can do to show it is working for ordinary Canadians in the upcoming budget expected in March. They seem to give up so much to large corporations with massive tax cuts that line the pockets of shareholders worldwide. We want them to focus on the real needs of Canadians. As Northern Development and Arctic Sovereignty Critic I will be working on a number of important northern issues as long as Parliament is still going on. As Transport and infrastructure Critic, I deal with many issues that affect all Canadians.

The issues in all we deal with here are compelling and important. Your feedback is vital to me. Please keep the emails, phone calls and letters coming.

Thank you, Masi Cho, Quyanainni,

Dennis

Right: Great Slave MLA Glen Abernethy, Mackenzie Delta MLA David Krutko, Tony Martin, NDP MP Sault Ste. Marie, Dennis Bevington MP Western Arctic, Frame Lake MLA Wendy Bisaro, and Weledeh MLA Bob Bromley in Yellowknife at the "No Place for Poverty" workshop held in Yellowknife in October 2010. (see page 4)

### My Members' Statement for February 4, 2011 Increase the Northern Residents Tax Deduction

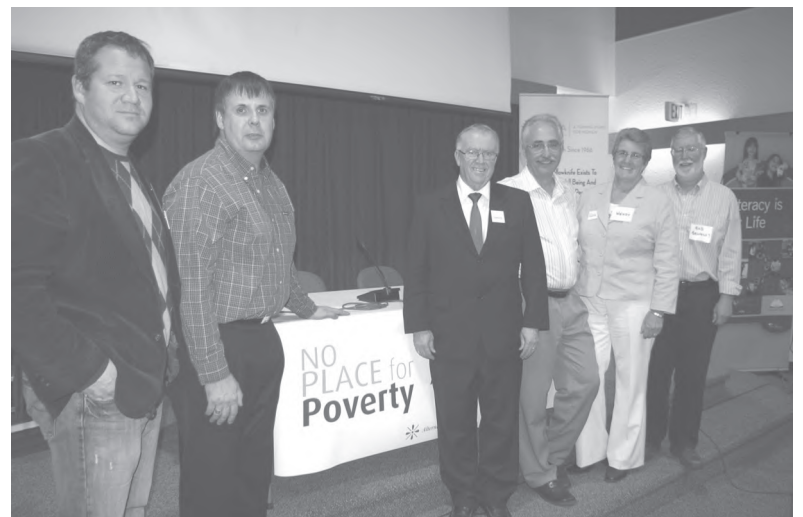
"Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the government once again about the high cost of living in Canada's North.

Here is an example. Many Canadians are alarmed that they may have to pay \$1 for each extra gigabyte of Internet. In the North, the average for each extra gig is \$10, and they start counting at as little as two gigs.

In December the Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Committee released its unanimous report on Northern economic development. The report recommended:

**"That the Government of Canada, to facilitate the development of the northern economy by attracting and retaining more skilled workers, consider enhancing the Northern Residents Tax Deduction to more fully compensate for the costs of living faced by individuals in the North, and consider a policy that provides universality to the travel portion of the Northern Residents Tax Deduction."**

The 2007 budget gave an insufficient modest increase. What Northerners need this year is an increase in the range of 50%. The Minister of Finance should really look at this, because he is the one who could deliver on this for Northerners."



## ‘Northerners Perspectives for Prosperity’ report

Just before Christmas the House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development tabled in the House of Commons a report on barriers to Northern economic development called ‘Northerners’ Perspectives for Prosperity’. The report, supported by all members of the committee, sets out 35 recommendations reflecting the main views and concerns expressed by the governments of the three territories, Aboriginal governments, Northern communities, organizations, businesses and experts on economic development in the territories. In total the committee held 26 meetings, including public meetings north of 60, and heard from 96 witnesses.

In my role as the New Democratic Northern Development critic I was there to hear and question the witnesses, I worked hard on this report and ensured as many northern points of view were heard. I provided guidance from a Northern perspective as the report was written. I believe the recommendations in the report will help facilitate economic development in the north by promoting a supportive infrastructure, a capable labour force, healthy citizens, improved living standards and empowered governments.

On December 13, 2010 I held a press conference in Yellowknife to present the report to Northerners. I hope Northerners will be able to use this report to help us build the north to its fullest potential.

I would especially like to thank Mr. Tony Wong who provided me with valuable advice as we developed the final version of the report.

If you would like a copy of the report, please contact my office in Yellowknife at 867-873-6995 or Toll free: 1-800-661-0802.



Dene National Chief Bill Erasmus and Member of Parliament Dennis Bevington at a Education conference held in Dettah, NT in January 2011.  
Photo: Josh Campbell



George Marlowe from Lutsel k'e talks about ‘Lady in the Falls’ during the Thaidene Nene presentation in Ottawa in December 2010. The community has recently begun negotiations with the federal government on a proposed National Park.  
Photo credit: Larry Innes



Gloria Enzoe of Lutsel k'e speaking about the significance of culture and traditional values, and what it means to the people of Lutsel k'e. Addie Jonasson and Terry Enzoe in the background were also part of the group who travelled to Ottawa in December.  
Photo credit: Larry Innes

### CONTACT DENNIS:

Constituency Office  
4908-49 St.  
Yellowknife, NT  
X1A 2P5  
Tel: 867-873-6995  
Fax: 867-920-4233  
Toll free: 1-800-661-0802  
Email: [bevind1@parl.gc.ca](mailto:bevind1@parl.gc.ca)

Ottawa Office  
Room 930  
Confederation Building  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
Tel: 613-992-4587  
Fax: 613-992-1586  
Toll free: 1-866-992-4587  
Email: [bevind@parl.gc.ca](mailto:bevind@parl.gc.ca)

## Statement in the House of Commons on Devolution October 21, 2010

“Mr. Speaker, less than a week ago the people of the Northwest Territories learned that their negotiators, after decades of trying, had reached an agreement in principle for the transfer of control and administration of crown lands and waters inside the Northwest Territories.

This event is significant as it is the furthest the people of the NWT have gotten to throwing off the colonial shackles that impede them from building a better north for themselves.

There is still much work to be done as this AIP is far from perfect. Mainly it is an agreement between only two parties. In order for devolution to work, an agreement must be reached that includes all of the aboriginal governments in the Northwest Territories, as well as the territorial government and Ottawa.

Perhaps if we could find a way to work together on this AIP, it will be the start of a new form of governance in Canada. This would make the NWT a truly unique part of Canada where public governments and aboriginal governments, through shared responsibility, work together for the benefit of all.”

Solar Energy Works in the Northwest Territories  
Advances in technology and cost reduction are making solar energy very useful for northerners. For more information check this website. [www.cansia.ca](http://www.cansia.ca)



George Kurszewski, Member of Parliament Dennis Bevington and Jack Van Camp at the Canadian Solar Association Conference in Toronto in December 2010.

CHECK OUT MY WEBSITE  
[www.dennisbevington.ca](http://www.dennisbevington.ca)

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS - Commemoration Projects

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has issued a Call for Proposals for its Commemoration Initiative.

In total, \$20 million will be available for this initiative. This call provides for \$10 million in 2011-2012. All proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by the TRC, who will then make its recommendations to the Government of Canada, which will administer the funds.

Applications for 2011 Commemoration proposals will be accepted until 2 p.m. CT, March 18, 2011. Those wishing to obtain funds for their respective Commemoration initiatives can get more information on criteria, eligibility and how to apply from the Commemoration Initiative Call Proposals Guide at [www.trc.ca](http://www.trc.ca).

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Dennis Bevington  
MP Western Arctic  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6



Alternatives North, the YWCA, and Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) jointly hosted “No Place for Poverty” workshop in Yellowknife in early October 2010. Eighty one (81) people participated in the workshop. Participants were varied, such as groups calling for an anti-poverty strategy, government managers and front-line workers, elected leaders, as well as individuals and organizations fighting poverty. The keynote speaker was Tony Martin; Member of Parliament for Sault Ste. Marie and the NDP critic for Poverty.

Photo: Craig Yeo

**NO PLACE FOR POVERTY** In June 2010 Tony Martin NDP Member of Parliament for Sault St. Marie introduced a Private Members Bill C-545 in the House of Commons to eliminate poverty. Since then Mr. Martin has worked hard to educate the public about his initiative.

A No Place for Poverty-Anti-Poverty workshop was held in Yellowknife on October 5 – 7, 2010.

The No Place for Poverty-Anti-Poverty workshop had six (6) objectives:

1. Deepen understanding of the experiences and definitions of poverty
2. Learn about anti-poverty efforts
3. Consider ways to measure the effectiveness and appropriateness of anti-poverty initiation
4. Establish anti-poverty priorities
5. Make recommendations on a process for moving forward on anti-poverty initiatives in the NWT
6. Make recommendations on next steps to follow-up on this workshop

Recommendations from this workshop is available at [www.alternativesnorth.ca](http://www.alternativesnorth.ca)

Send us your comments:

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