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Representing Northern Business Since 1973

March 13, 2009

The Honourable Chuck Strahl
Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development
10 Wellington Street, 21st Floor, Suite 2100
Gatineau PQ K1A 0H4

Dear Minister Strahl,

On behalf of the Members of the NWT Chamber of Commerce I am writing you to further reinforce our organization's position on Federal Budget 2009.

As you are aware, the Chamber came out publically as a strong supporter of the budget in general, as well as recognizing your efforts as a great champion for the North. We certainly see value in a great many of the initiatives proposed in Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's financial plan for the nation.

In particular, the five-year extension to the Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development program was most welcome. The same can also be said about the messages of support from the federal government regarding the Mackenzie Gas Project.

With regards to the location of the headquarters of the Northern Development Agency recently detailed in your government's budget, the NWT Chamber firmly believes this vital institution should be located in the Northwest Territories.

In terms of geography, resident expertise, efficiency and cost of operation, ease of travel, overall staff retention and proximity to significant potential development activities, the NWT is the most logical place for this facility to be located.

I would very much welcome your thoughts on this issue and trust you will carry our message forward as this matter is discussed and decided by you and your colleagues in Ottawa.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ann Marie Tout".

Ann Marie Tout
President
NWT Chamber of Commerce