

April 17, 2020

The Honourable Bill Morneau, P.C., M.P.

Minister of Finance

Dear Mr. Morneau,

Operating businesses in the North presents unique challenges, such as higher costs, challenges with transportation, seasonal and weather dependencies, and human resources. To address these challenges during this unprecedented time means we need unique solutions.

As you know, mining is the largest private sector employer and contributor to the gross domestic product in all three Territories. I am very concerned about the operating mines being forced to scale back or cease operations, as the economic ramifications would be extremely severe for us. During my discussion with the NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines they indicated the current eligibility requirements for the new Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), specifically the need to show a drop in corporate revenue from the same period last year, is problematic for many companies; some have uneven revenue generation, and some were ramping up to bring their mines into full operations.

Further, in alignment with the Northern Senators' letter to you of April 9th, a more creative approach to addressing non-revenue generating businesses such as mineral exploration companies, junior mining companies, and construction companies is needed. This is especially important to ensure we can recover from this pandemic, as without new developments the economic recovery in the North may be in jeopardy.

I have also been discussing assistance with our Chambers of Commerce in the Northwest Territories. Although the CEWS March threshold reduction to 15% and the recently announced work on commercial rent assistance are both welcome, they are requesting greater flexibility with the CEWS for the North. As such, I am supporting their request that all commercial operations in the North that have incurred losses due to COVID-19 are able to qualify for CEWS regardless of revenue shortfall.

I am available to discuss this or any other ways in which the Government of Canada can further assist in supporting our Northern economy.

Yours truly,



Michael V. McLeod, M.P.

C. The Honourable Dan Vandal, P.C., M.P.

The Honourable Larry Bagnell, P.C., M.P.