Lori Idlout, MP for Nunavut
ᓗᕆ ᐃᓪᓚᐅᖅ ᒪᓕᒐᓕᐅᖅᑎᕐᔪᐊᖅ ᓄᓇᕗᑦ

House of Commons
ᒪᓕᒐᓕᐅᖅᑭᒃᔪᐊᖅ

February 24, 2025

The Honourable Patty Hajdu
Minister of Indigenous Services

Sent via email: ministresa-ministeris@sac-isc.gc.ca and patty.hajdu@parl.gc.ca

Minister Hajdu,

RE: Uncertainty about Inuit Child First Initiative

Mayors across Nunavut have raised serious concerns about the Inuit Child First Initiative (ICFI) ending on March 31. If funding is not renewed, thousands of Inuit children and families across Nunavut will face devastating consequences. Nearly 42 per cent of children under the age of 18 in Nunavut live in poverty, compared to the national average of 18 per cent. These programs provide essential services like food voucher support, benefiting more than 15,125 Inuit children. An interruption of funding or loss will worsen health and education inequities.

In 24 hours, over 2000 Nunavummiut signed my petition to extend ICFI funding. Clearly, this program must continue.

The lack of response from your office and Indigenous Services Canada to Nunavut's elected officials is both disrespectful and deeply concerning. You have yet to provide clear assurances regarding the program's future:

1. Natan Obed, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami President, left unheard;
2. John Main, Nunavut Health Minister, left unheard;
3. Margaret Nakashuk, Nunavut Minister of Family Services;
4. Jeremy Tunraluk, Nunavut Tunngavik President; and the many Nunavut mayors are ignored by you.

Your silence is unacceptable.

Your government must address this issue to ensure that children and families receive the support they need. The well-being of Inuit children cannot be left in limbo. I urge you to tell Nunavummiut your intentions for this program. Will you extend or change ICFI, and will Inuit children be able to rely on further support?

Taimakalauq,

Lori Idlout ᓗᕆ ᐃᓪᓚᐅᖅ
Member of Parliament ᒪᓕᒐᓕᐅᖅᑎᕐᔪᐊᖅ
Nunavut ᓄᓇᕗᑦ