

# NEWS RELEASE



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## Nunavut Tunngavik Reacts to Federal Budget

(March 5, 2010 – Rankin Inlet, Nunavut) Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. Vice-President of Finance Raymond Ningeocheak commented on the release of yesterday's federal budget. Ningeocheak said he was disappointed by the absence of new investments to address major social problems in Nunavut.

"NTI recognizes and welcomes the renewal of a number of health programs that were set to expire, including programs for maternal health and diabetes, but it is surprising and disappointing that we do not see any new money to address the housing crisis in Nunavut, or to provide further help with respect to health and education issues," said Ningeocheak. "NTI is also disappointed at the absence of new money for Inuit language programs and services, and the improvement of small craft harbours in more communities in Nunavut."

Ningeocheak said NTI was pleased to see some funding earmarked for residential school survivors, but this appears to be driven primarily by extra claims arising out of the court settlement on this topic. "The closing down of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation is troubling. Former students need those healing services," he said.

Ningeocheak was pleased to see proposed reform and \$45 million committed to the food mail program. "This integral Northern program is designed to improve access to affordable healthy food. While the specific changes have not been made public, NTI hopes that an increase in transparency and accountability by all who access the program is present. The subsidy is intended to provide access to healthy food by the consumers."

Ningeocheak also said the \$8 million allocated over two years for a Nunavut General Monitoring Program was welcome news. "NTI does not take hesitate to take credit for this, as the absence of this program has been an ongoing breach of our land claims agreement and we have identified this in our major implementation lawsuit."

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