



Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Cambridge Bay, Nunavut

October 20-22, 2020

Resolution#: RSA-20-10-13

Impacts of COVID-19

Moved by: James Eetoolook

Seconded by: Pauloosie (PJ) Akeegok

WHEREAS Nunavut Inuit live in isolated fly-in communities, with substandard health and medical services and many have overcrowded housing conditions and poor social and health indicators;

AND WHEREAS Inuit would face the highest risk within Canada and potential disastrous consequences, should the COVID-19 pandemic arrive in Nunavut;

AND WHEREAS under Article 23 of the *Nunavut Agreement*, the Governments of Canada and Nunavut are obligated to develop and implement Inuit Employment Plans (IEPs) and Pre-employment Training Plans (PTPs) to increase and maintain the employment of Inuit at a representative level in all departments, occupational groupings and levels, but have not done so;

AND WHEREAS Inuit employment levels in government have continued to stagnate at around 50%, resulting in many inequities that have manifested during the COVID pandemic, including that (i) many non-Inuit workers, teachers, mining workers and health care providers were flown in from the South, increasing the risk to Inuit and others, and (ii) government services on which Inuit depend are frequently not available in the Inuit language;

AND WHEREAS some Inuit mine employees are being negatively impacted by COVID-19 whereby they are prevented from working during the pandemic and currently are receiving only 75% of their pay;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Nunavut has been compelled to impose severe COVID-19 restrictions due to the above factors, resulting in very high costs to the Government, including the costs of southern construction workers and others isolating in southern hotels, which have severely impacted the government's upcoming capital budget;

AND WHEREAS communications with Inuit regarding eligibility and process for accessing Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) payments, including from Service Canada, were not reliably delivered in Inuktitut, and so there was confusion and misunderstanding regarding CERB eligibility among many Inuit;

AND WHEREAS many Inuit believed that, in keeping with its name, the CERB was a universal emergency benefit, and applied for the benefit in good faith for the purpose of providing their families with food and other essentials during the crisis;

AND WHEREAS many Inuit are not in a position to pay taxes on CERB benefits, or on monies disbursed through the federal Indigenous Community Support Programs;

AND WHEREAS for Inuit living in extreme poverty who may have received the benefit although ineligible, the CERB was an emergency benefit, which they are not in a position to repay;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Members call on the Governments of Canada and Nunavut:

1. to address the high risks of COVID-19 and future pandemics to Inuit and build capacity in Nunavut through continuing and adequate investments in improved health services and other public sector infrastructure;
2. to ensure the Crown's fulfilment of its Article 23 obligations, and thereby build capacity among Inuit in Nunavut, in particular in the critical fields of education, health and justice, and in all occupational groupings and levels;
3. in keeping with Article 23, to ensure that work in Nunavut is done by a representative Inuit workforce, thereby reducing the need for southern workers to be flown in and employed in Nunavut at great expense, and at significant risk during the pandemic;
4. to address the needs of Inuit mine employees who are prevented from working during the pandemic and currently are receiving only 75% of their pay; and
5. to work together and with NTI to ensure that Inuit who received emergency benefits during the COVID pandemic are not exposed to undue hardship through the taxing of benefits, and that benefits received in error are forgiven.

In Favour: All

Against:

Abstentions:

Carried:

Defeated:

Dated: October 22, 2020