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HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

The Honourable Bernard Valcourt
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
441-S, Centre Block
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

December 29, 2014

Re: Failure of TPM to supply financial information to Algonquins of Barriere Lake

Dear Minister Valcourt,

We note with surprise that the government has placed the Algonquins of Barriere Lake on the top of the list for First Nation bands who are not in compliance with the First Nation Financial Accountability Act. As a result, the government has begun to withhold certain funds from the band for their supposed refusal to post band financial information. And yet, your department must be fully aware that this community has been unable to get basic information on its financial status since being placed under Third Party Management in 2006.

Eight years is a long time to be under third party management. And yet reasonable attempts by the band to obtain financial information such as the level of their debt and the manner in which band funds are being spent have been apparently rebuffed by the government-imposed manager. How can the band post financial information when the community has been denied access to audits, financial reports and a debt relief plan?

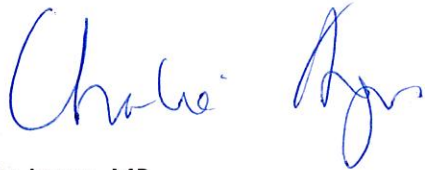
It has come to the point where the Algonquins of Barriere Lake are looking to take both the government and the third party manager to court over this failure of accountability regarding fiduciary obligations to the community.

Minister Valcourt, you have claimed that the First Nation Financial Accountability Act will provide First Nation communities with information as to how their funds are being spent. The failure to ensure that government-imposed third party managers have an obligation to meet this criteria would certainly make your claims of putting the interest of band members first look ridiculous.

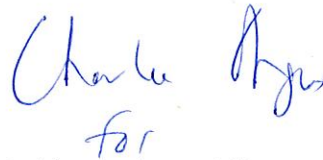
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Rather than punishing the people of Barriere Lake, what steps will you take to establish clear rules of accountability and transparency for the third party manager? What steps will you take to work with the community to rid themselves of this unaccountable system of management and re-establish a credible level of community-based financial accountability?

We look forward to hearing from you in this matter.



Charlie Angus, MP
Timmins-James Bay



Mathieu Ravnagat, MP
Pontiac

- cc. National Chief Perry Bellegarde, Assembly of First Nations
Chief Ghislain Picard, AFN Regional Chief, Québec/Labrador
Chief Casey Ratt, Algonquins of Barriere Lake