

House of Commons

Room 649D Centre Block
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Tel: (613) 992-2919
Fax: (613) 995-0747

**Chambre des communes**

Piece 649D, Édifice du Centre
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Tel: (613) 992-2919
Fax: (613) 995-0747

Timmins

202-60 Wilson Avenue
Timmins, ON P4N 2S7
Tel: (705) 268-6464
Fax: (705) 268-6460

Charlie Angus

Member of Parliament for Timmins - James Bay
Député de Timmins - Baie James

Kirkland Lake

201-30 Second Street
Kirkland Lake, ON P2N 3H7
Tel: (705) 567-2747
Fax: (705) 567-5232

Minister of Natural Resources James Gordon Carr
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

March 2nd 2016

RE: Ring of Fire

Minister Carr,

The Ring of Fire provides a tremendous opportunity to unlock the economic potential of Northern Ontario, Ontario, and the entire Canadian economy. Federal leadership is sorely needed to move this project forward. I am writing to ask that this government ensure that the Ring of Fire is part of the promised commitment to infrastructure projects across the country. As well, the Federal government has an important role to play in engaging in meaningful consultation with First Nation communities to ensure that all the benefits of this huge project leads to meaningful improvements in the lives of the people of the north.

The previous government's lack of leadership on this issue was very unfortunate. There was no attempt to bring together the major players, there was no infrastructure plan, and there was no consultation with First Nations. In fact, then minister Tony Clement s received a failing grade from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

While I recognize that little can be done to overcome the fundamental economic conditions of the commodity market, it must be recognized that consultations with First Nations and long-term infrastructure investments are complicated projects that take time to work out and implement. It is imperative that the government start to put the fundamentals for the Ring of Fire in place, so, that we can take advantage of the market on the upswing. That is why there must be urgency to start now, especially in a downturn.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce estimates the project will generate in short term 9.4 billion in GDP, 6.2 billion for the mining industry, sustain 5,500 annual full time jobs, and generate 2 billion in government revenues. Over the 32 year lifespan of the project it is estimated that the project will generate over 25 billion in GDP, up to 16.7 billion for the mining industry, and 6.7 billion in government revenue. And yet, the project still faces the same major challenges: lack of coordinated consultation with First Nations, the inadequacy of infrastructure, and no coherent plan from the government.

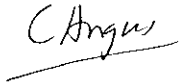
The Ontario Provincial budget that was tabled last week committed, “up to one billion dollars for strategic transportation infrastructure development in the Ring of Fire region.” Infrastructure is a necessity to getting this project off the ground. I am asking that the federal government match this provincial commitment in our upcoming federal budget. With your government so intimately tied to the provincial government, there is no excuse for inaction.

As a part of this commitment the federal government needs to convene relevant stakeholders to identify a long term infrastructure plan for the development of the Ring of Fire to ensure that isolated communities in the region are able to benefit from infrastructure investments in roads and hydro. Full time year round surface transportation will provide immediate benefits to any First Nations communities that they connect to especially with these communities facing increasingly precarious ice roads from climate change.

Lastly, any plan for the Ring of Fire must capture value added processing. We need to move away from the rip, strip, and ship mentality of the previous government to our natural resources. It is imperative that we gain full value and maximize economic growth out of our country’s resources.

The previous government has wasted ten years on getting the Ring of Fire to move forward. I am asking that we work together to ensure the federal government provide leadership in matching the provincial commitment of 1 billion dollars for infrastructure, meaningful consultation with First Nations, and captures the value from processing the materials. I look forward to seeing these issues highlighted in the upcoming budget and working with you to get it done.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "C Angus". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Charlie Angus
MP Timmins-James Bay