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Minister of Public Safety Ralph Goodale  
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**RE: Policing Crisis in Nishhawe Aski Nation**

Minister Goodale,

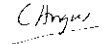
I am writing you regarding the crisis being faced by communities in Nishhawe Aski Nation from inadequate police services. As you are no doubt aware officers of the Nishhawe Aski Police service (NAPS) have taken an overwhelming strike vote. They are unwilling to continue to put their lives at risk from grossly-underfunded budgets, lack of safe working conditions and substandard facilities. I note that on the day that this strike mandate was given the RCMP made a public commitment to improve policing services for Indigenous people in other parts of the country. So the question needs to be asked, why should the largest Indigenous police force in the country be left in such disregard when their federal and provincial counterparts are well-funded and supported?

We have over twenty communities in NAN territory where there is only one officer working. This means they are going to calls without back up, some of which involve violence, guns and/or domestic disputes. This not only puts them at risk but also leaves citizens in these communities at risk. Lives have been lost because of this unacceptable double standard. I remember all too well the funeral of two young men who burnt to death in the make shift jail cell in Kashechewan. I would have expected that after this brutal tragedy that the federal government would have stepped up to the plate to end the inequity. But this hasn't happened.

The unwillingness to end the discriminatory underfunding has forced the NAN communities to take this issue to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. And now we are facing an unprecedented potential walk out of police officers who are simply unwilling to put themselves at risk any more. If Canada is serious about forging a new nation to nation relationship, you will stop fighting these communities at the Human Rights Tribunal and come to the table to find solutions.

I understand that the tripartite agreement will be re-negotiated for 2018, however, given the gravity of the situation and the possibility for a serious and prolonged strike that timeline simply doesn't cut it. I am asking that you reach out to the NAN leadership as your provincial counterparts and the NAPs administration to address the inequitable situation that has left our officers and communities at risk.

Sincerely,



Charlie Angus  
MP Timmins-James Bay