



January 17, 2025

Honourable Gary Anandasangaree  
Minister of Northern Affairs  
House of Commons  
OTTAWA ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Anandasangaree,

We had the opportunity to have a conversation over a meal while you were in Grandmother's Bay announcing the progress of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band's Agricultural Benefits Claim. Throughout the day, you spoke to, and we heard from many local leaders speak about what reconciliation looks like, or what it ought to.

Yes, the recognition of the previous wrongdoings in settling the Agricultural Benefits Claim is a step. However, as we speak to the ongoing injustices we see, we also need true reconciliation in how Canada treats the Inherent and Treaty Rights holder, as we will outline in the body of this letter.

We write to you today with serious concerns about the cost of living in our province, specifically for those living in Saskatchewan's North.

We have proof of a jug of milk being sold for more than \$18, a bag of apples costing \$15 and a package of grapes costing \$20 — families we've spoken to simply can't afford these prices. To make matters worse, a doctor in La Ronge is now reporting treating 27 cases of scurvy, a disease caused by a lack of Vitamin C from fresh fruits and vegetables. If left untreated, scurvy can be fatal.

This has to stop. These are Canadian people, and they can't afford the basic food needed to keep them healthy. The Sask. Party government has ignored our repeated request for action to investigate and recommend actions to lower these food prices.

In recent years, there have been two House of Commons committee studies into the high food prices Northerners are facing today: one study by the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs specific to the issues facing people in Northern Canada, and another on by the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food on the challenges impacting all Canadians.

Those studies both found that there is more that your government should be doing to lower food costs for people in Northern Saskatchewan.

I urge you to act quickly to implement these outstanding recommendations, including ensuring that the Nutrition North program is modernized to meet the needs of people in Northern Saskatchewan communities, partnering with Indigenous people to ensure they are able to exercise their Treaty and Inherent rights to hunt and gather healthy foods, and supporting community-based solutions to address food insecurity.

We cannot expect families to continue to fend for themselves when the price of food is driving them further into debt and putting their health at risk.

I look forward to your response,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jordan McPhail". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke.

Jordan McPhail  
Official Opposition Northern Affairs Shadow Minister