



Alternatives North

The Honourable Bob McLeod
Premier of the Northwest Territories
Government of the Northwest Territories
Box 1320
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

January 23, 2017

Delivered Electronically

Dear Premier McLeod:

Alternatives North wants to acknowledge the effort and resources the GNWT has invested in fighting climate change in the NWT. There is no doubt that all governments, indeed all people and institutions, must make fighting climate change their first priority. Northerners know better than most that climate change represents nothing less than an existential threat to all of humanity.

Alternatives North has been trying to do its part too. We have commissioned research by experts designed to help point the Territories in the most positive direction possible. Most recently we published a report, *A 100% Renewable Energy NWT by 2050*. A copy of it was forwarded to you and all Members of the Assembly on November 1st, 2016.

We were pleasantly surprised ourselves by the conclusions of that research: that the NWT could indeed be 100% renewable by 2050 *using presently available, already proven technologies*. Before that there was some doubt that given our geography we would be able to do our part to meet the national government's commitments in this field.

The next steps for the GNWT seem obvious. It should provide its analysis of the options presented in the report, including which renewable energy options it considers the most viable. Then, based on this analysis, the GNWT should determine and announce a timetable outlining which of the available options it intends to implement during the remaining life of this Assembly.

Let us make it perfectly clear that the report in no way suggested that "more time is needed" to start getting the job done. On the contrary, it notes that the transition to renewable energy can and must start immediately and that it is possible to do so using existing technology.

In correspondence sent recently to various members active in Alternatives North, you repeatedly mentioned challenges in "off-grid communities" as a reason for inaction, yet these communities are not anywhere close to being a main source of GHG emissions in the NWT. A perceived challenge in the smallest sources of emissions in the territory must not impede undertaking effective and available action in those areas where immediate and significant progress can be made.

In spite of the GNWT itself being a leader in northern renewable energy solutions, the same correspondence also suggested that the GNWT is focused on being exempted from any national price on carbon. To Alternatives North, such a position represents a wasted opportunity to work with the federal government and to negotiate additional funding to help with the NWT's transition to renewables. If you were to begin to sell the NWT as the leader in northern renewable energy solutions that it is - and wants to continue to be - great opportunity might result.

As stated at the beginning of this letter, Alternatives North does recognize and congratulate the GNWT for the steps it has taken to date to bring us to a renewable energy future by 2050, the deadline set by world leaders in Paris last fall. Those first steps have been taken. What are our next ones?

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben McDonald', written in a cursive style.

Ben McDonald
for Alternatives North

cc. All MLAs