



MLA Darius Elias

Vuntut Gwitchin RIDING UPDATE

fall 2010

Dear Friends,

I send a heartfelt thanks to the people of Old Crow for their incredible support and to recognize your hard work. We have many success stories to appreciate, like our land based education experiential project, our roads and drainage upgrades, sports and recreation programs, completion of the detailed design of the water well upgrades, the renewing of the communities bandwidth hardware, and the Hpylori study.

No matter what the issues or concerns are, my constituents are always there participating, solving problems and making our community a greater place to live.

Change is upon us, and we all will be called upon to reaffirm our values and commitments and to hold them up against the hard realities in our community and the territory today and see how we are measuring up, to the legacy of our forbearers, and the promises to our future generations.

It is important for me to consistently affirm the grandeur of our community when I speak on your behalf. Not because our creeks are filled with gold or the buried treasures under our lands, but because of the true richness of our territory: our people and the strength of our families.

We are rich with heritage and cultural diversity and the vastness of our lands, the purity of our waters, and our ever-wondrous fish & wildlife are the real currency of our vast wealth.

I wish you happiness and I wish you health... Nidiveh Guzuuh in 2011!

Mahsi' choo K'agwaadhat drin tagwinaach'uu shah nahiindik, shigwitr'it gwiinzii t'agwahal'yaa geenjit.

In Unity,

Darius Elias
MLA Vuntut Gwitchin



High school students harvested a moose near Rock River in September! "Chaa kat ch'ezhur nathohgaht'ii".



My Great Grandpa, the late Elias Kwatlatyi. Guess who the baby is?

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Presentation to the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development in Ottawa ~ Monday, November 1, 2010

Food Mail/Nutrition North Canada

Mr. Darius Elias (Member of the Yukon Legislative Assembly):

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

My name is Darius Elias. I'm a member of the Yukon Legislative Assembly, and I represent the fly-in-only community of Old Crow. We are the only community in the territory to benefit from the food mail subsidy program.

I want to begin by expressing my community's appreciation. The federal food subsidy program is an investment that means a great deal to my constituents. My testimony to you today will focus on a united message from my constituents, the community of Old Crow, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation chief and council, and all 17 of the territory's members of the legislative assembly.

The Nutrition North Canada program objective to ensure that healthy foods are more accessible and affordable to our community of Old Crow will not be achieved should the program be implemented solely as a retail subsidy on April 1, 2011.

My ask to you is that come April 1, 2011, the Nutrition North Canada food subsidy program include an exemption for our community. I ask that it have flexibility to maintain the personal shipping transportation subsidy from Whitehorse, our capital city, to Old Crow, for nutritious perishable food, non-food items, non-perishable foods, and essential non-food items, via Air North—Yukon's airline.

I also ask to maintain a transportation subsidy that is administered by Air North, removing Canada Post from the picture altogether, with the airline being directly accountable to the Department of Indian Affairs.

Implicit in this ask is the ability for our community members to purchase affordable, healthy foods from wherever they choose, and to take those healthy choices to Air North, which provides the only and most direct transportation service route possible to get the healthy foods to dinner tables in Old Crow.

We feel this community-based solution is the best way to fulfill the Nutrition North Canada program objectives. It is my hope that our united message from the Yukon Territory will provide the necessary justification for a change in mandate, a program exemption, and flexibility to fully meet the Nutrition North Canada program objectives, thus helping to maintain our strong, vibrant, healthy Arctic community in Old Crow, Yukon.

We understand we need the best investment possible, and we believe we already have a workable system in the Yukon. With some fine-tuning, it can be more efficient. My constituents are wondering what the department of INAC is trying to fix in the Yukon. This level of overhaul in the food mail program is considered to be excessive and unnecessary by my constituents.

The Nutrition North Canada program, implemented as is, has the potential to negatively impact the physical and financial health of our families and the single mothers and elders who are on a fixed income. That is unacceptable. The Nutrition North Canada program is viewed as a step backwards and a potential disservice to our community.

I'll finish by submitting some prices of food in Old Crow and in Whitehorse. The prices in Old Crow are subsidized.

In the Northern Store, the parent company to the North West Company—the distribution centre is in Winnipeg, Manitoba—a loaf of Wonder bread in Old Crow, as of last Saturday, was \$6.19; in Whitehorse, it was \$2.97. Two litres of milk in Old Crow are \$9.59; in Whitehorse, it is \$2.98. One dozen eggs in Old Crow is \$6.19; in Whitehorse, it is \$2.98. A five-pound bag of McIntosh apples—there are about ten or eleven apples in the bag—in Old Crow is \$11.59; in Whitehorse, \$4.49.

I thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony to you today. Mahsi Cho. I'll be willing to answer any and all questions that are presented to me on behalf of my constituents. Thank you.



Preparing to submit testimony to the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs & Northern Development.

Some of the inflated prices on Old Crow shelves.



Nichih Gwanal'in.

Esau, Kenny, Joe, Katherine and Roger, as the MLA for the Vuntut Gwitchin and as your citizen, I take this opportunity to congratulate and thank all of you for your years of tireless dedication, commitment and sacrifice to ensuring we live in a sustainable, healthy and vibrant community.

To me, your leadership in building our Vuntut Gwitchin government is nothing short of exemplary and monumental in nature.

Our future generations will look back 100 years from now and view your decisions as visionary and they will be proud of the way you challenged processes, inspired a shared vision, how you empowered your citizens to act and most importantly the way you all encouraged the heart.

Dinjii kat tthak zhat t'iginch'uu goochik'tik nijaanjii gwiinzii nihlah gwitr'it t'agwahaa'yaa."



Thank you from your MLA.

Energy Drinks: are they safe for children?

Many of these drinks are loaded with caffeine and up to 14 other ingredients and I don't believe they are safe for children and teenagers to consume.

I have requested that the Government of Yukon immediately ban the drinks from all Yukon schools and to work with Health Canada to ensure the consumption of energy drinks is being properly regulated in Canada.

> Health Canada recommends a maximum daily caffeine intake of no more than:

- 45 mg for children aged 4 - 6
- 62.5 mg for children aged 7 - 9
- 85 mg for children aged 10 - 12

Most energy drinks contain 70 to 300 mg of caffeine compared to 34 mg in a can of Coke.

Most energy drinks do print a recommendation of consumption by adults only and Health Canada should make this mandatory and regulate the drinks in some way.

On November 12th, 2010 the 80-member Yukon Medical Association passed a resolution supporting my efforts to regulate the sale of energy drinks in the Yukon.

"They make claims to increase performance, alertness, burn fat, to help people feel stronger, more energetic – none of these claims are substantiated by any kind of study," said Dr. Russell Bamford. "And at the moment ... energy drinks are flying under the radar."

"To date, no province or territory in Canada has implemented any restrictions on the sale of such drinks, but for now, Elias' push for a sales ban for those under 18 has the backing of the Yukon Medical Association." ~ Whitehorse Star, November 15th, 2010



Using Cell Phones While Driving Is Dangerous

There has been overwhelming support across the Yukon for a ban on cell phone use while driving. Over 1600 people responded to the government's survey on distracted driving. 87 percent want a ban on people using hand held cell phones while driving. 94 percent want a ban on all electronic hand held devices and 97 percent want the RCMP to give out tickets to those who break the law. Emergency service workers can use phones in the course of their duties.

As a result the legislature has passed Bill 91 to prohibit drivers from using cellular telephones and email and texting devices while driving. The law comes into effect on April 1st, 2011.

This is an issue that I've worked hard on and it's going to bode well for our territory I believe. It's a necessary piece of legislation that's going to save lives.



Kim, Tracy & Joe cooking up a "Crow Flat" breakfast for the high school students at the dorm.

STOP!

Violence Against Women

Violence against women is a commonplace tragedy in Canada and in the Yukon. It affects our daughters, our sisters, our mothers, our friends and colleagues. Through them and through their children it affects the very health and well-being of our communities.

I have requested that the Government of Yukon take a more holistic view of an issue that affects Yukon women more cruelly than it does women anywhere else in our country. I believe a comprehensive approach is necessary for our territory to combat violence against women once and for all.

What we require is a powerhouse of an effort, with everyone involved pushing in the same direction, to deal with this issue on a long-term basis. It requires long-term funding, and long-term commitments, beginning with the development of a comprehensive strategy.

I again thank the minister responsible for the Women's Directorate for allocating \$185,207 towards a public education campaign focusing on violence against women and the doubling of the prevention of violence against women program from \$100,000 to \$200,000!

In Recognition!

Andrew Charlie

~ for calling square dances for 56 years in 3 different Old Crow dance halls! Andrew you have made thousands of people so happy over the years. Mahsi cho!

Lyndsey Keaton

~ has been selected to represent the Yukon in the upcoming Canada Winter Games in Women's hockey. Way to go!

Steve Climie

~ thank you for your passionate style in educating our youth and your dedication to life long learning.

Saniz Catholique

~ On October 1st, 2010 Saniz was awarded the *Dreamcatcher Awards* for Outstanding Community Service.



The Dreamcatcher Awards are presented to a community organizer who has worked with either youth or community groups at the grass roots level and have not received the level of recognition deserving their work. The community organizer will have been involved in organizing sports or recreation activities; arts and cultural activities; education or health related activities.

In Memoriam

May You Rest In Peace

Geno Charlie
~ August 5th, 2010

Dr. Rev. Ellen Bruce
~ October 16th, 2010



Dryden can't believe his eyes...or his luck!



Rev. Marion Schafer holding Krystal Firth

Resolve to be tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant with the weak and the wrong. Because sometime in your life you will have been all of these.

~ *Goddard*