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**The Hay River Seniors' Society
#210-86 Capital Dr.
Hay River, NT, X0E 1G2**

Ms. Sandy Lee,
Minister of Health and Social Services
Govt. of the Northwest Territories
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 2L9

March 19, 2010

Dear Ms. Lee,

On March 17 members of our Society and invited guests met to discuss the information available on the government website on the Supplementary Health Care Benefits now available to seniors, the survey that we are asked to complete and the public consultation which will take place on March 25, 2010 in our community.

Several concerns were expressed during our meeting:

- The lack of options which would generate deeper discussion.
- How the program is divisive.
- How much money will be saved by introducing income thresholds?
- How much will it cost to administer such a program?
- The fact that the March 25 meeting has not been widely publicized.
- By bringing the discussion of income thresholds into the mix, people feel some decisions have already been made regarding any changes.
- The deadline for coming up with a sustainable, workable plan is not realistic.

Those in attendance were encouraged to fill out the questionnaire and urged to attend the meeting on March 25. Bear in mind many seniors do not have computers.

Our seniors are deeply appreciative of the benefits we receive and understand that we are growing in numbers and therefore making greater demands on the health care system. We also care about making the system work for those who have no access to supplementary health care benefits.

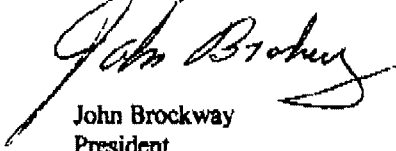
Our seniors' community is comprised of people who have chosen to make Hay River their home. We have family here, our roots are deep. Many of us volunteer our time to worthy causes and raise funds for our socially conscious charitable agencies. It is difficult to quantify or place a monetary value on these contributions.

The GNWT expends resources attempting to attract people to work and live in the north with limited success. Seniors' incomes are fixed and we are concerned about any increases in the cost of living like health care and utilities. An exodus of seniors from the north looking for a more affordable place to live would create a domino effect and negatively impact on volunteerism, transfer payments and reducing the market for local businesses.

We feel Supplementary Health Care Benefits should be available to all seniors regardless of income and therefore the provision of the benefits should not be contingent upon or prorated by an income threshold or test.

We respectfully request that our concerns be carefully considered as we move forward in the consultative process.

Yours truly,



John Brockway
President

Cc: Michael McLeod - MLA, Deh Cho
Wendy Bisaro - MLA, Frame Lake
Glen Abernathy - MLA, Great Slave
Paul Delorey - MLA, Hay River North
Jane Groenewegen - MLA, Hay River South
Floyd Roland - MLA, Inuvik Boot Lake
Robert C. McLeod - Inuvik Twin Lakes
David Ramsay - MLA, Kam Lake
David Krutko - MLA, Mackenzie Delta
Jackson Lafferty - MLA, Montwi
Kevin Menicoche - MLA, Nahendeh
Jackie Jacobson - MLA, Nunakput
Norman Yakeleya - MLA, Sahtu
J. Michael Miltenberger - MLA, Thebacha
Tom Beaulieu - MLA, Tu Nedhe
Bob Bromley - MLA, Weledah
Robert Hawkins - MLA, Yellowknife Centre
Standing Committee on Social Programs - Tom Beaulieu
Kelly Schofield - Mayor, Hay River
Brian Lefebvre - President, Hay River Chamber of Commerce