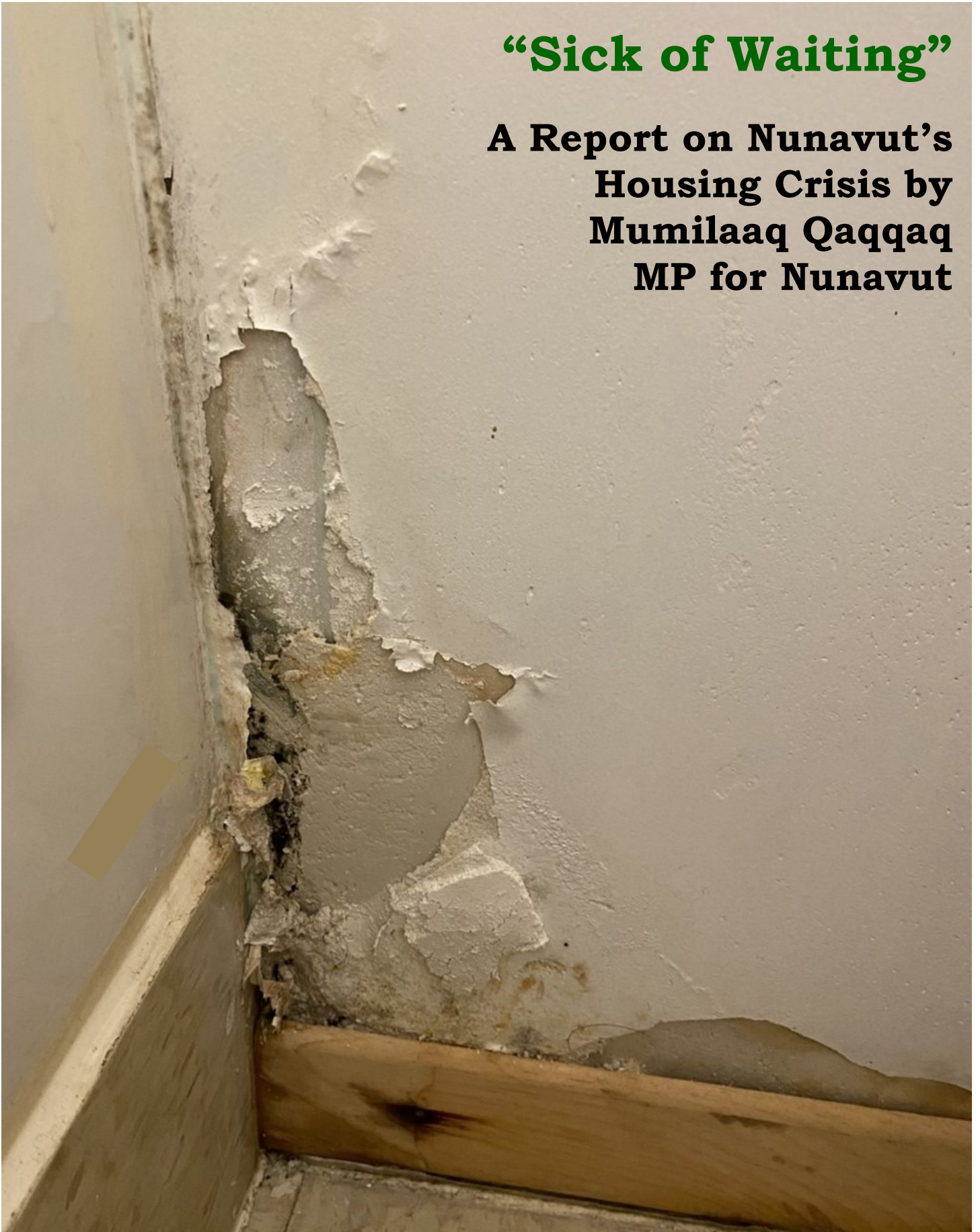


# **“Sick of Waiting”**

**A Report on Nunavut’s  
Housing Crisis by  
Mumilaaq Qaqqaq  
MP for Nunavut**



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## A short note about this report....

We've known for decades that Inuit and Nunavummiut have been living in unacceptable conditions. Despite repeated promises from successive Liberal and Conservative governments, families comprised of multiple generations continue to live in the same mould-ridden house as they have for years.

During the 2019 election, I made a promise to highlight their plight. Since being elected, I have repeatedly called on this federal Liberal government to end the conditions which the United Nations Special Rapporteur called "abhorrent, and [which] too often violate the right to adequate housing." The Nunavut Housing Corporation (NHC) does not have a budget for tenant damages. This is one item that the Federal Government doesn't cover. The NHC can only do what it can with the money it is given.

I urge the government not to treat these as just numbers - they represent people. People whose entire families have been drastically impacted by the lack of housing; people whose families have broken down from overcrowded and inadequate housing.

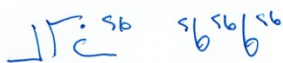
Over the course of the Fall and Winter I travelled to Kitikmeot and Kivalliq because I wanted to share what often goes unseen. This report attempts to highlight the ongoing housing needs in Nunavut and to amplify the voices of the Inuit and Nunavummiut whose pleas for safe and clean housing conditions have fallen on deaf ears for far too long.

The damage caused by this neglect is beyond measure.

Providing adequate housing in a way that fits Nunavut's needs would have a positive effect not only on people's living situations but also on their health, on the wellbeing of their families, and on the wellness of the entire communities.

We can do better. We must do better, and we are going to do better.

Inuit and Nunavummiut lives are at stake.



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**Mumilaaq Qaqqaq, MP**  
**Nunavut**

**About the photos:** The communities I visited were small, where everybody knows each other. These photos, taken with my phone, are cropped to remove any identifying features of the homes or families I visited in order to guard their privacy.

**About the quotes:** I realize that quotes lose impact when not attributed to an individual. But once again, I've tried to balance privacy while sharing concerns expressed to me in person and via email.

**A vanity which has been in desperate need of repairs for many years now.**



## Section 1: Gjoa Haven

Gjoa Haven is a community of 1324 people, and on average there are 4 or 5 people per household.

### Population by age:

19 years old and under:	540 (40.7%)
20 to 39 years:	355 (26.8%)
40 to 49 years:	150 (11.3%)
50 to 69 years:	110 (8.3%)
Over 69 years old:	25 (1.8%)



Mould on a window sill.

The typical home I visited in this community had a minimum of six people living in it, with only *three usable bedrooms*. Statistics Canada cites 125 housing units (both private and public) in which a major repair is needed as of 2016. There are 200 social housing units total in this community.

### Households

- Total managed units in Gjoa Haven: **280**
- Housing Units that require repairs are over **50%** of all public housing units.

***“Lots of broken tiles that need to be covered by carpet. Children have been sick so often they had to move to another unit. There’s mould under all the sinks.”***

***- A woman in a private residence in Gjoa Haven***

Renovations in this community are sporadic, with units getting work done inconsistently and often being left incomplete. In this community there is only one local contractor. Often times, the contractor simply cannot keep up with requests for repairs, or have access to the supplies needed to perform all of the repairs asked. Despite more than 50 repairs having been made in the past 2 years, the NHC cannot keep up with the demands placed upon it .



Tarp used to patch a hole in the wall

One home I visited had been in desperate need of mould and sewage remediation for years, and yet the only renovations undertaken for a decade had been a new coat of paint.

In that same home a 12-year old child is living with tuberculosis.

Incredibly, I was dumbfounded to learn that in another unit, ventilation was installed in the living room to deal with mould. Mould spores and humidity needed to be dealt with in the bathroom and bedrooms, not in the living room. After speaking with the Housing Authority, I was told that installation of proper ventilation is the only way to prevent mould from reappearing.

Examples go on and on...

***“My sewage overflowed and only sewage was removed, it wasn’t cleaned properly and mould grew and little flies appeared.”***

***- A woman in a home of 12 people.***

## Section 2: Taloyoak

Taloyoak is a community of just over 1000 people.

### Population by age:

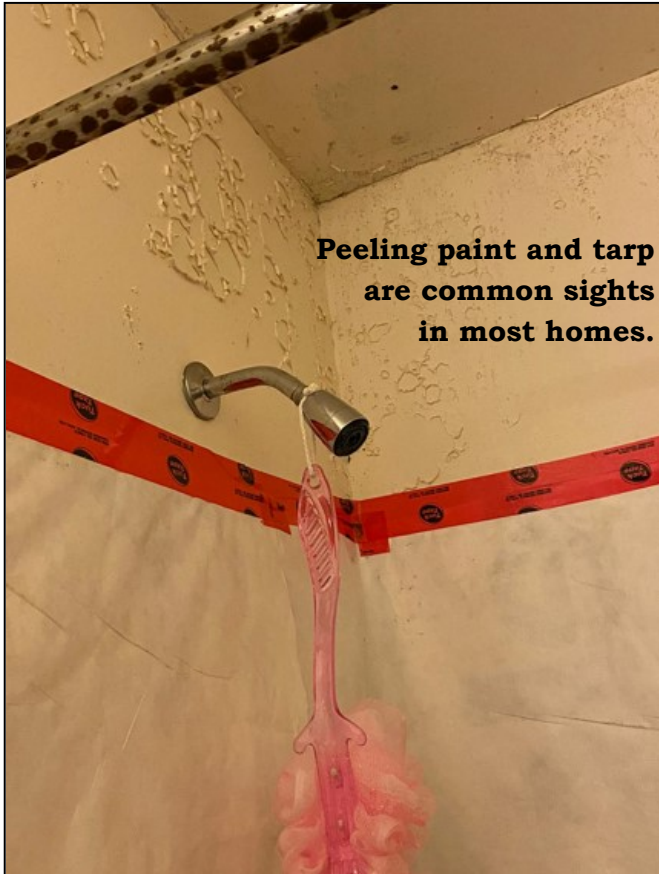
19 years old and under:	480 (46.1%)
20 to 39 years:	305 (29.3%)
40 to 49 years:	105 (10%)
50 to 69 years:	120 (11.5%)
Over 69 years old:	30 (2.8%)

188 people in this community are social housing occupants. According to the Taloyoak Housing Authority, 112 people are still waiting for a space to become available, beyond the already full spaces. That's 29% of the population that needs social housing!

What's more, many units were built before 1975, and have "long outlasted their expected lifespan," says Rene Boisvert, Housing Manager for the Taloyoak Housing Authority. These woefully inadequate housing units desperately need essential repairs just to bring them up to standard building codes. Over 100 of my constituents are living in spaces where they need to share a bedroom with a family member.

### Households

- Total managed units : **224**
- Percentage requiring regular maintenance or minor remediation needed: **63%**
- Percentage requiring major repairs: **37%**



***"[My] Mom has been sleeping in the living room for 14 years. The top of the walls leak and drip into the living room and bedrooms. When mould is clearly present mom gets skin irritations all over her body."***

***- A woman in a duplex in Kugaaruk***

The typical Taloyoak home I visited had four people living in it. Among them, only one unit did not have mould present. One family told me they had been on the waiting list for a more suitable unit for over 13 years!

In another unit, a child was so frequently sick due to mould that the child was placed in foster care. I was devastated to hear that. No parent should ever lose their child because of a government's inability to properly build and maintain housing.

***"[T]here was a 161% increase in wait list applicants between 2011 and 2020. They only have 206 total public housing units, with a wait list currently of an additional 112."***

***- Taloyoak Housing Authority***



## Section 3: Kugaaruk

Kugaaruk is a hamlet of over 900 people

### Population by age:

19 years old and under:	465 (49.7%)
20 to 39 years:	270 (28.8%)
40 to 49 years:	100 (10.6%)
50 to 69 years:	80 (8.5%)
Over 69 years old:	20 (2.1%)

The Hamlet of Kugaaruk has 168 social housing units in its current stock, and based on my conversations with Hamlet managers, they officially recognize 23 units that are in need of mould alleviation. They have built 10 new units this year, and will build another 10 next year. This is for a population of just over 900.

### Households

- Total managed units available in Kugaaruk : **184**
- Percentage of units in need of mould remediation : **14%**



**Plastic sheathing is a common sight in most homes.**

In my personal visits to homes I witnessed that almost all units had window problems. Most windows were drafty and did not properly close, especially with ice buildup in the fall and winter.

This community does not have an ambulance system that is adequate for transporting residents to healthcare centres when they are needed.

Further, residents complained to me that the healthcare provided was not culturally sensitive for Inuit, and in some cases, not in their language. As a consequence people may be reluctant or unable to get the care they need.

In the past eight years, the waiting list for social housing units has

increased from 40 to 100.

One woman, a city councillor for the hamlet with whom I spoke, says she has had cluster flies, or fruit flies, year-round, for over a year. She cannot afford the necessary reparations to her unit and has had to spend significant amounts of her own money attempting to clean the mould with cleaning products. Sadly but predictably these products have been inadequate.

In 2019 she removed baseboards to try a deeper clean and found pockets of maggots from the flies that lay their eggs in the mould patches.



## Section 3: Kugaaruk (cont'd)

Here is a sample of what I heard in this community:

***“My windows fill with ice, the ceilings in the living room and bathroom leak.”***

**- A man in public housing in Kugaaruk**

***“I put my thermostat at 30 in the winter because it’s so cold. The windows fill with ice and snow.”***

**- A woman in a home with 12 people**

In Kugaaruk, draft and heat-loss issues are compounded by the effects of mould and the large number of people living in these homes. The average number of people in a three-bedroom house for example, was seven. As in the other communities I visited, this overcrowding and lack of space is deeply worrisome, from a public health point of view.

Of all communities visited, Kugaaruk had the highest average rent cost, with respondents reporting an average of \$487.08/month for rent.

Higher rent in this community may be an example of higher income earners living in social housing. Nunavut uses a grid to determine rent, and even then, elders are not assessed any rent, and rent can never exceed a high of 22% for tenants that earn \$135 000 annually or more.

## Section 4: Salliq

### Population by age:

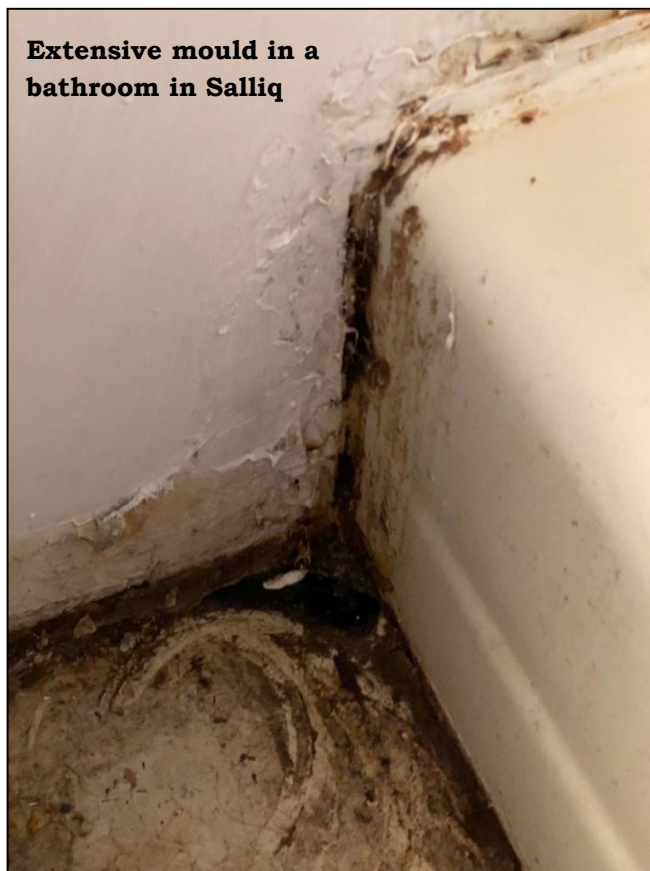
19 years old and under:	435 (48.7%)
20 to 39 years:	267 (29.9%)
40 to 49 years:	85 (9.5%)
50 to 69 years:	85 (9.5%)
Over 69 years old:	20 (2.2%)

Salliq, formerly known as Coral Harbour, is a community of roughly 900 people that has recently undergone many changes. In comparison to all the homes I visited for the purpose of this report, the homes in this community had the least overcrowding in social housing units. In fact, it is the only community I visited where the average number of bedrooms in a home matched the number of people living in the unit.

That said, there are still 130 people on a waiting list for homes, 43 of whom are currently homeless! There is a critical need for funds for building new social housing units. As further evidence of the crisis that exists across Nunavut, the last time a new unit was actually built in this community was in the 2014-2015 season.

### Households

- Total managed units: **190**
- Percentage of units requiring regular maintenance or minor repairs: **70%**
- Percentage of units requiring major repairs: **30%**



Even though overcrowding is less of a concern, other common concerns persist, such as mould and frozen doorknobs and other weather related problems.

***“There is a lack of air circulation, my children and parents are constantly sick. We assume [there is] water damage under the tiles. In the washroom, you could step on the floor and see water come out.”***

***- A man in a unit that was built in the 1960s***

***“Some outlets haven’t been working properly, the plugs fall out or don’t work at all.”***

***- A man in a unit in dire need of remediation***

The dependency on sealifts and materials from the south makes reparations challenging in a community like Salliq.

The local housing authority can only do so much. The Federal Government must step up and help. In a community of 900, 130 still do not have adequate housing.



**Mould, poor caulking and floors in desperate need of repair are some of the commonly needed repairs in the homes I visited.**



**In this home, the window could no longer close. The bent window was now held with a rope, leaving a major gap that allowed in cold air, rain and snow.**

## Section 5. Naujaat

Naujaat has a population of 1095.

### Population by Age:

19 years old and under:	585 (53.4%)
20 to 39 years:	300 (27.3%)
40 to 49 years:	85 (7.7%)
50 to 69 years:	105 (9.5%)
Over 69 years old:	20 (1.8%)

The community of Naujaat is the community that we visited with the least amount of data. Although only ten homes were visited in Naujaat, demographic data shows that there are 205 housing units, and 130 people on the waiting list for social housing, among the total population of 1095.

Statistics Canada lists 115 of the housing units as “unsuitable” with 60 needing major remediation. Employees of the housing authority in Naujaat told me that they suspect a new applicant added to the list today would wait six or seven years for a unit, if nothing changes.

Of the ten homes visited, every single one of them had visible mould and were overcrowded. One unit had 14 people living in it, with only four bedrooms.



**Crumbled, rotten flooring  
in a home in Naujaat.**

### Households

- Total managed units in Naujaat: **205**
- Percentage of units deemed “Unsuitable” by Statistics Canada: **56%**
- Percentage of units requiring major repairs: **29%**

People were eager to describe their renovation needs to us:

***“The house is extremely unlevel.”***  
***- A single mother in Naujaat***

***“Windows leak and there’s mould in the bedrooms.”***

***- A woman in Naujaat, in a home with seven people***

***“Bathroom has mould. Windows gets filled with ice and leak. Most [windows] are missing handles.”***

***- A woman in Naujaat, on the waiting list for a larger unit***

## Summary

The communities I have reviewed in brief in this report provide a snapshot of the larger crisis that persists across my constituency of Nunavut.

Together with my team we gathered information from four sources:

1. Publicly available data and statistics, to provide a big picture profile of the communities.
2. Homes that my team and I personally visited, to see firsthand the conditions in which my constituents were living.
3. An on-line resource available for people to submit their information to me from across Nunavut.
4. E-mails and Social Media, where people also submitted testimonials and photos.

As I mentioned in the beginning of this report, it has been a challenge trying to highlight the living conditions without identifying the families in these relatively small communities. Their struggles however, are not small. There are housing crises across Nunavut - and there have been for decades!

The following table provides averages and general statistics.

**Table: Average number of inhabitants and usable bedrooms in the homes I visited.**

<b>COMMUNITY</b>	<b>INHABITANTS PER HOME</b>	<b>USABLE BEDROOMS PER HOME</b>
<b>Gjoa Haven</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Taloyoak</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Kugaaruk</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Salliq</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2.5</b>
<b>Naujaat</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>

As a national standard, most housing corporations shouldn't charge more than 30% of a person's income in rent. However, delays in income reporting cause some tenants to pay higher than they should. Use of T4s to determine income, rather than present situations, have caused some people to end up paying higher than 30% of their factual income in rent for some months, resulting in undue poverty and hardship.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation rent grid is capped at \$60 per month for people that make less than \$27 040/year, however, we encountered people in our home visits that paid more than that and were currently unemployed or under employed.

**Constant flooding, as well as rotten flooring and walls have made it impossible to use this bathtub.**



## Summary (cont'd)

The visits to these homes proved to be overwhelming for me.

I was devastated to see the conditions under which my constituents were living. What's worse, I heard repeatedly that they had been living under these grossly unhealthy conditions for years. New generations were born into these mould-infested homes, and they were now in their teens or young adults. Many have only ever lived in these homes.

Families shared deeply personal stories of strife within their family units because they had no space, no separation from each other. Conditions were exacerbated in the long winter months.

I will not forget the smell of mould-infestation that permeated many homes. The thought that elders, adults and children continued to live there left me feeling helpless. My stress leave following my return was a direct result of this experience.

My people need help. They need that help now.

Promises don't get rid of mould.


Words don't fix windows and doors.

Empathy doesn't fix leaking pipes.

Money for remediation and new units is the only solution. It is clear that the Nunavut Housing Corporation is underfunded. I want to make it very clear, that the issues noted in this report are not the NHC's fault. They are doing what they can with the resources that they have. Neither is this the Government of Nunavut's fault. The fault for Nunavut's housing concerns lies squarely with the Federal Government that needs to do more to support the NHC and every organization in Nunavut, with greater funding, and by listening to local solutions. Beyond these numbers, the cost of overcrowding and maintenance is exceeding what the public housing program was intended to do.

I will continue to advocate for each of those families that welcomed me into their homes, and for every family in need. I will do everything I can to amplify the voices of Inuit and Nunavummiut.

I'm just getting started. There is much to be done.



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**Mumilaaq Qaqqaq, MP**  
**Nunavut**

## Appendix I: Observations and thoughts...

Although in Nunavut we know many of the statistics, we don't often hear the stories or complexities from individuals in communities that come as a result of lack of access to housing. For decades, Inuit have been fighting for adequate living spaces, year round clean water, and affordable living. Decades of severe underfunding by the Federal Government, and ignorance and neglect from the current and previous Governments has resulted in continued cycles of trauma, intergenerational trauma, and abuse.

The intention of this housing tour was not necessarily to focus on data or statistics but to bring a human component to the numbers we hear in Nunavut all too often. I needed to give myself a true understanding and a holistic perspective of what it means for an individual to not have access to safe space. These are the lives of our families, friends, and community members. Inuit have been neglected by the Federal Government for far too long. Please be mindful that this data was gathered from a small amount of homes, so it may not necessarily reflect the same numbers from what other organizations have recorded or released publicly, but that doesn't make it less true. Arviat and Baker Lake are not included in the numbers, for example, as there wasn't enough sign up for home visits to provide a comparative amount. I wanted this report to show real information, and it would have been unfair to include a community where I only visited a few homes.

The Member of Parliament for Nunavut's duty is to advocate for constituents on the federal level. Although this is a position of influence, it is not one of direct decision making power. As the current MP I believe it is the duty of all of those with decision making power related to Nunavut to do the best to their ability to advance the rights of Inuit and Nunavummiut. I will continue to do my best to advocate for basic human rights (housing, affordable living, and clean water) among other files such as adequate consultation, safe spaces for women and children, and food security. I never met a non-Inuk living in a home with obvious mould. All of the individuals I spoke to facing so many barriers, housing being a major one, were Inuit.

In the short, abusive, at times complex, and one-sided relationship between the federal institution and Inuit, we have seen increased tensions within and between Inuit communities. During my travels I witnessed many arguments, people expressing frustration, and anger from individuals in all positions. A lack of access to housing and safe spaces has not only created tension in homes, but has created tension between families in communities. It was clear that the result of being unable to provide enough housing for a community could cause high tension even around the conversation about housing itself. There were meetings where I had to redirect the conversation to the purpose of my visits, to hear from community members not to become frustrated with one another. The Federal Government does not have to interact or resolve these disputes, but they are the unseen cause of them.

Being raised in the territory, the Kitikmeot region wasn't visited or discussed as much as the rest of the territory. I had suspected that the conditions in that region would be worse and my visits definitely confirmed that for me. In meetings, I would openly say something along the lines of "Nunavut is forgotten, the Kitikmeot even more so." Often this was met with tears of agreement, followed with comments or pleas for help for an opportunity to have one's own space.

Communities in the Kitikmeot region were struggling with being able to keep up with maintenance, order needed equipment, and be able to hire the employees needed to do the basic work on the units. The mould in homes was obviously much worse in the Kitikmeot region from people in all different positions, I couldn't see any sign of anyone abusing any position to gain more or better housing. It was clear that mould in homes was affecting Inuit of all backgrounds and incomes.



## **Appendix I: Observations and thoughts... (cont'd)**

Communities in the Kivalliq region had been faced with a lot of overcrowding, often times having multiple families in one household. This did happen in the Kitikmeot region too, but it wasn't as glaring as the mould there. Communities like Arviat, Rankin Inlet, and Baker Lake, are growing rapidly. Arviat for example has 1/3 of their population that is 15 years old and younger, what will happen to the housing in these rapidly growing communities, with already overcrowded numbers? In a few years when that population is old enough to need to move out of their parent's homes, where will they go?

A community visit usually looked like this: A sign up sheet was put up at the local (usually) hamlet office for home visits. During each community visit there was a meeting with, typically, the local mayor, MLA and housing manager. Sometimes there may have been others present by invitation of the local leadership, or there happened to be a hamlet council meeting that I could attend. Each meeting was a discussion around the purpose of my visits, being clear that I was not there to point fingers at anyone but to hear from individuals in the various communities. As many visits would be done off of the sign up sheet as possible, sometimes people were not home or couldn't meet after all though. A number of questions was asked during each visit, along with pictures at the request or acceptance of individuals in the home.

There are a few things to keep in mind. During travel there were COVID restrictions and flight schedule changes. Although I would have liked to work more, I had to really watch my health (temperature) in order to keep myself well enough to continue travelling, or else I wouldn't be allowed into a community. We would've also loved to go to more places but the flight schedules didn't allow for it. I had travelled by myself in Gjoa Haven, Taloyoak and Kugaaruk. I met with staff to travel to 4 of the 5 Kivalliq communities, going to one on my own. The way our Member of Parliament budgets work, everything comes out of pocket except for flights, and then gets reimbursed. This is even true for my staff. Three weeks of travelling in Nunavut is a lot of money, there was a limit that I could handle, or could ask of my employees.

In data collecting and surveying there were a number of questions asked. After a number of visits there were common themes that developed in issues with infrastructure, leaking windows, sinks and multiple people on the housing waitlist. The data collected was from a small portion of homes, it doesn't reflect the entire situation in Nunavut, but provides a clear enough snapshot of what we saw.

Below are some highlights in each community:

### **Uqsuqtuq (Gjoa Haven)**

Community planning will be running into lack of access for development as they get more units, locations of new units will have to be looked at carefully. The territory needs to be developed and zoned for even the possibility of new homes. A minimum standard of materials and home is also needed to ensure that new units coming in can handle the territory's climate and aren't quickly degraded. Many of the porches locations directly faced where the wind came from most often, resulting in many units not having access due to frozen doors during the winter and often having to replace them during the warmer months.

## **Appendix I: Observations and thoughts... (cont'd)**

### **Uqsuqtuq (Gjoa Haven) (cont'd)**

There is a severe lack of access to safe space for women in the north. I had met an older lady who had not wanted to discuss the concerns of her unit, but having to share it with her nephew. Her nephew is in his early 20s, living in the same unit and has been on the waitlist since he was eligible (19 years old). With tears in her eyes she approached me with letter after letter of support for access to her own unit, so that she could be on her own. She admitted to me that her nephew has abused her physically and verbally. Unfortunately, despite support from her neighbors and the community, she didn't have enough evidence to press charges. Her options are to stay in her unit until it's her turn on the waitlist, or homelessness.

### **Taloyoak**

Taloyoak, along with Kugaaruk, was the worst mould I saw in all of the communities. Many homes had infrastructure that would simply be impossible to clean once any kind of mould or dirt gets into it. There was a lot of long-term water damage from ceilings due to major pipe leakage. Many homes clearly smelt of mould, many bathrooms had visible mould on the ceiling.

Can we say that colonization is no longer alive if we continue to see Inuit children forced into the foster care system? I met a parent whose child had continued respiratory issues and was often sent out of the territory for medical treatment. Eventually, it was determined that the child's home was "unfit" for them to live in as it was too mouldy. A mouldy home that a mother had no other options in, had nowhere else to turn. She had her son taken from her, out of the territory, and put in the foster care system in southern Canada.

### **Kugaaruk**

Kugaaruk, along with Taloyoak, was the worst mould I saw in all of the communities. Units that were only 2 or 3 years old were leaking from the windows and in the corners of ceilings (sometimes ceilings being 10+ feet high). Water damage was definitely a big concern in many homes. Although there were these concerns there were also great initiatives in mould remediation and training for mould prevention. Newer units often didn't have a back door or secondary exit, many expressed concern around their safety in the event of fire or need to escape.

There is housing needed in the territory but there is also specialized housing needed in the territory. I had met an individual with cerebral palsy that was worried he would have to leave the territory soon. His condition had been deteriorating with age and his home would soon become inaccessible to him. So far, there wasn't an opportunity to make housing accommodations for his needs to be met. No one should have to leave home to access the comfort that they need.

### **Salliq (Coral Harbour)**

Going from the Kitikmeot to the Kivalliq region felt like day and night with the amount of mould that I had just seen. There were many issues with furnace rooms, outdoor porches and outdoor side paneling. There was a strong urge for stand alone homes instead of apartment units. I had a chance to talk to some homeowners that were frustrated with not being able to access the services needed to have home renovations done. Sometimes being able to contract the same individual(s) that social housing uses but, being put at the bottom of the priority list since they were in private residences.

## **Appendix I: Observations and thoughts... (cont'd)**

### **Salliq (Coral Harbour) (cont'd)**

Over the past 5 years Salliq had seen no social housing units built but had seen more Government of Nunavut homes built since then. This came up repeatedly in conversation. We had also learned that in order to obtain a contract to do construction one was now expected to supply labour and materials oneself. This left many, if not all, local contract opportunities lost, as local companies could only supply the labour but not afford to purchase materials. A family was going to be able to get renovations done after a long wait but had to find their own accommodations during that time. They ended up not having any availability so they weren't able to have the renovations done after all.

There was also concern around the fact that the community didn't have a transient unit.  
Naujaat

Homes in Naujaat mostly had major infrastructure issues as the overall topic, with dipped ceilings and critically unlevel homes. With many big families no one was really interested in 2 or 3 bedroom units but something much larger. In one home we visited, we met with a grand-mother in a 3 generation home who had been spending the last few weeks sleeping on the couch because there was a lack of space.

Many people went out of their way in Naujaat for one another. There is a big reliance on hunting as a source of food and income. In units with such little space it was very hard for hunters to butcher meat or seamstresses to work on skins. I had met a mother that was living in a home with 10 other people. She had major health concerns and was advised by the doctor to move into her own space as to provide less stress in recovery, of course she couldn't do this.

### **Kangiq&iniq (Rankin Inlet)**

Lay overs in Kangiq&iniq were often quite short. We were able to get in a meeting with some local leadership. There we had discussed items such as the need for mining companies to make more community contributions, the need for long term care spaces, and homelessness within the community.

### **Arviat**

Unfortunately due to a shortage of sign ups for home visits we didn't include Arviat data in the report. We were able to meet with the Premier, mayor, and local housing manager.

### **Qamani'tuaq (Baker Lake)**

Baker Lake was a last minute addition. With changes in Calm Air flights we had to overnight every night in Kangiq&iniq. I was able to make it from Arviat to Baker Lake in one day. I heard concerns around the hamlet being very underfunded and not being able to keep up with community infrastructure. Although Qamani'tuaq is rapidly growing there is a lack of jobs in the community, one of the biggest expenses for the housing office was utilities (water, sewage and electricity), paying the hamlet and energy corporation directly for these services.

## Appendix I: Observations and thoughts... (cont'd)

### Final thoughts

There were many common threads I picked up on throughout the tour. Leaking windows, drafting doors, water damaged bathrooms, and furnace rooms without proper ventilation. Inuit were always willing to be open, kind, and share with me. I was often told “I’m sorry” or “I’m embarrassed”, but I am grateful people opened their homes and hearts to me. I met Inuit that had done their best in clean up, in keeping safe space, in trying their best and continuously running into barriers. People teaching themselves how to navigate systems to bring concerns far enough to court to be moved into a safe space. Individuals pushed into already damaged or mouldy units, having children taken from their homes and not having access to the space needed. Construction workers, health care professionals, grocery store management, housing management, teachers, SAOs, social workers, nurses, mental health workers, contractors and so many influential and/or decision-making positions were much more often non-Inuit than Inuit. Inuit make up about 85% of Nunavut’s population.

*I believe nothing would change fundamentally, in Nunavut, even if you remove almost every Inuk.*

*That’s not right.*

In these travels a number of other things came to light. It was clear that some people weren’t aware of caring for a home or navigating systems. In the history of colonization and forced relocation there were many changes, including moving from tents and iglus to wooden structures. I saw many homes with furnace ventilation covered that shouldn’t have been, people not turning on their bathroom fans after the shower is used. Not knowing these kinds of things is not the fault of Inuit. Inuit were forced from their homes and way of life into communities and continued to be forced into situations that are incredibly difficult to get out of, to this day.

Ultimately, we all have a role to play of responsibility to one another. The health and safety of Inuit is the responsibility of all those in positions of power and influence. We have never seen the Federal Government provide basic human rights for Inuit. I will keep pushing for the Federal Government to do the right thing. I will keep fighting for Inuit and Nunavummiut.

# Statement to the House of Commons

October 2, 2020



Mr. Speaker, housing in Nunavut and across the North is in a crisis state.

I recently did a housing tour in the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot regions, and what I saw was inhumane.

Lack of adequate housing and safe spaces result in death.

Inuit are dying.

I saw homes where babies and young children were living that were overcrowded and mould-ridden, and that had not been renovated in years.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation is severely underfunded by the federal government. The federal government has a responsibility to fund housing in an adequate way, with appropriate materials for the North. Adequate housing is the least this government can do after years of neglect, oppression and colonization.

I will be presenting a report on what I saw in the coming weeks, and I expect the federal government to act on it now. Inuit and Nunavummiut cannot wait any longer.

**Mumilaaq Qaqqaq**

**MP for Nunavut**

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