

The Honourable Louis Sebert  
Minister of Justice  
Minister of Lands  
Responsible for the NWT Power Corporation  
Responsible for Public Engagement and Transparency

**Re: Open Government Public Engagement and Transparency**

Dear Minister Sebert,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input as part of your engagement for the development of an Open Government Policy.

The Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce represents 358 Yellowknife businesses, and we have received a substantial amount of feedback from our membership on this important issue. Fundamentally, we believe that the Government of the Northwest Territories should have transparency and open government policies that are consistent with other Canadian jurisdictions.

The Board of Directors of the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce would like to formally request that Members of the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly:

- Establish an Office of the Ombudsman for the Northwest Territories, to be appointed by the legislature and completely independent of the executive as per the recommendations outlined in the *Establishing an Office of the Ombudsman for the Northwest Territories* report, tabled document 103-17(5), tabled on June 4, 2014. An Office of the Ombudsman exists in nine provinces and the Yukon.
- Investigate the best way to implement a lobbyist registry that is publicly accessible via the internet, as per Motion 35-17(5) on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The Response to Motion, tabled document 269-17(5), tabled on June 3, 2015 explains the current model of reporting which only requires Ministers to report on meetings with lobbyists. This is not sufficient. A typical lobbyist registry applies to Ministers, regular MLAs and senior bureaucrats and includes meetings, phone calls and emails, as per typical lobbyist registries in Canada. Comprehensive lobbyist registries exist in nine provinces.
- Create a policy where minutes are kept for public consultations and working groups and published online.

- Establish a standalone Whistleblower Protection Act.
- Release detailed reports on awarded government contracts, including sole sourcing, that include the vendor selection process, the value of the contract and the name of the vendor who was awarded the contract. We are also interested in reports that measure the effectiveness of BIP.

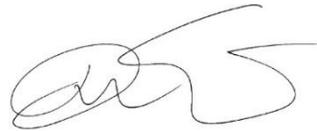
Open government and transparency are important issues for the Yellowknife business community and we are pleased to provide you with our recommendations. We look forward to receiving a response outlining the intent and proposed timelines for the Government of the Northwest Territories to implement these measures.

Respectfully,



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Renée Comeau  
President



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Deneen Everett  
Executive Director

