



September 26, 2019
For Immediate Release

Labrador Inuit delegation disappointed Premier not available to discuss concerns with north coast ferry

A delegation comprised of representatives of the Nunatsiavut Government and the five Labrador Inuit Community Governments will travel to St. John's next week with the intent of demanding solutions from Premier Dwight Ball over ongoing concerns with the provision of marine services to Labrador's north coast.

"The concerns of our communities are real," says Nunatsiavut President Johannes Lampe. "There is a lot of fear that many of the goods people depend on for the winter won't make it to the communities in time. The Kamutik W, which services our communities, is frequently delayed because it is unable to operate during adverse weather and sea conditions. Many are questioning whether or not the vessel is suitable to operate in our region, as we have not experienced the same level of concerns in the past."

A resolution passed unanimously during a sitting of the Nunatsiavut Assembly last week called on First Minister Kate Mitchell to convene an emergency meeting with the Premier, who is also the Minister responsible for Labrador and Indigenous Affairs, and Transportation and Works Minister Steve Crocker. Despite repeated requests, the Nunatsiavut Government was informed that the Premier is unavailable to meet with the delegation.

"We are extremely disappointed that, once again, the Premier is turning a blind eye to the real and legitimate concerns of Labrador Inuit and our communities," says President Lampe. "We had asked for a meeting, and were told that it was 'not doable'. We were not offered any reason, or given any indication when the Premier would be available. The fact that he is unable to find time to meet with us on such an important issue speaks volumes about his commitment and willingness to reconciling differences between the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the province's Indigenous population."

The Premier was quick to interrupt his schedule earlier this month to travel to Labrador to deal with a matter involving comments made by MHA Perry Trimper, notes President Lampe.

"When there are other issues that are concerning and troubling to an entire region, he is not as eager to accommodate. Surely, an issue as serious as the state of marine services to our communities is no less important to the Premier than doing damage control to protect a member of his caucus."

Media Contact:
Bert Pomeroy
Director of Communications
(709) 896-8582