

April 15, 2021

The Honourable Lisa Dempster  
Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation  
Minister Responsible for Labrador Affairs  
Deputy Government House Leader

Dear Minister Dempster:

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation, Minister Responsible for Labrador Affairs, and Deputy Government House Leader. As part of this Cabinet, you are working on behalf of, and alongside, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador to face the challenges confronting our province while preparing for the great opportunities ahead. I have confidence in our Government and in this province. This is the right team at the right time.

Together, we will deliver on our promises to the people of this province. Together, we will promote a healthy Newfoundland and Labrador, drive meaningful economic opportunities, foster inclusive population growth, modernize education and childcare, and build strong partnerships. We will realize our vision of a prosperous and fiscally responsible province that is inclusive and welcoming to people from all over the world.

As Minister, you will take a lead in building a prosperous future for this province. You will foster strong relationships with Indigenous governments and organizations and with relevant stakeholder groups. Each relationship must be founded upon respect and mutual understanding.

Now is the time to take meaningful steps on the path to prosperity, and decisive action to build a solid foundation for future generations. I am asking you to work with your Cabinet colleagues and with all Members of the House of Assembly to advance the following priorities.

As Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation, I ask that you continue to partner with Indigenous peoples in Newfoundland and Labrador to inform and monitor appropriate and relevant efforts to advance reconciliation now and into the future.

Keeping with Call 57 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, work with your colleagues in Cabinet, other members of the House of Assembly, and Indigenous leaders to develop and deliver training on Indigenous perspectives to elected representatives, their staff, and the public service. This will help foster deeper understanding and cultural awareness of the unique history and perspectives of each community and support the maintenance of respectful relationships with Indigenous peoples in the province.

I ask that you host an annual Indigenous Leaders Roundtable to advance matters of mutual importance to Indigenous communities. Continue to advance work on land claims agreements and self-government agreements.

You will continue collaborating with your Cabinet colleagues, including the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development, as well as the Nunatsiavut Government, and other community partners to address the recommendations of the Independent Review of Child Protection Services to Inuit Children in Newfoundland and Labrador to improve outcomes for Inuit children, youth and their families.

In keeping with the memorandum of understanding signed between Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Innu leadership, support the participation of our Government in the forthcoming inquiry into the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu in the child protection system. This work will be done in collaboration with the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development, and the Government of Canada. Please continue to collaborate with Innu leadership on the Anti-Racism Working Group.

Working with your colleagues, the Minister of Justice and Public Safety and the Minister Responsible for Women and Gender Equality, continue to advance necessary work in response to the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Along with the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, please also support the Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills on the Ministerial Committee on Anti-Racism.

Recognizing the challenges put forward by the COVID-19 pandemic, please work with Indigenous groups to identify an appropriate time and approach for an apology to Residential School survivors.

Working with the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation and the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, I ask that you prioritize the efforts of the interdepartmental working group focusing on provincial monuments and observances. Through public engagement and close consultation with Indigenous peoples, the group will provide recommendations on how best to recognize and commemorate our history, namely through the designation or re-naming of historical and commemorative sites, statutory holidays, and other areas of cultural significance.

This work shall include working with Indigenous leaders to update the description of the provincial Coat of Arms to more accurately describe the peoples and cultures of this province. In consultation with Indigenous leaders, please continue advancements to create and install a statue to commemorate the Beothuk people.

In collaboration with the Minister of Education and with Indigenous groups, I ask that you continue to revise and update the existing curriculum and devise new curricula on the culture, history and traditions of the Indigenous peoples of our province.

As Minister Responsible for Labrador Affairs, I ask you to ensure that widening and hard-surfacing of the Trans Labrador Highway continues, and upon completion, work closely with the Government of Canada on options and feasibility of a road connecting the north coast of Labrador, in partnership with the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure. We need to

continue to provide funding for safe access from isolated communities in Labrador to the nearest service centre through the Labrador Transportation Grooming Subsidy Program, including grooming machines and equipment for Cartwright, Nain, and Hopedale. I ask you to ensure the delivery of the Labrador Travel Subsidy program for minor sport organizations and athletes and the Labrador Aboriginal Nutritional and Artistic Program. Please support the work of the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to explore a fixed link between Labrador and the Island of Newfoundland under the National Infrastructure Fund.

In your role as Minister, please ensure that the Labrador Affairs Secretariat provides advice to provincial government departments and agencies on policies, programs and services affecting Labrador. You will lead Arctic and Northern policy initiatives and continues to support the Combined Councils of Labrador by providing an annual operating grant.

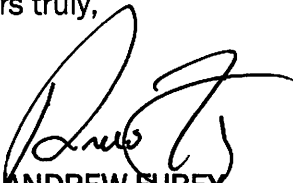
We will always remain focused on a robust economy where there is a place for all workers, an economy that embraces renewable energy while maximizing our oil and gas advantage. We will foster a business environment that supports new and growing technology work and we will reimagine and reinvigorate our fishing and mining sectors to meet global demand for our abundant resources.

As we work to build a strong economy, we must also work to create a prosperous society. We envision a province with healthy, active residents who not only have access to the means to treat illness but also to achieve wellness. We envision a province with vibrant, engaged communities in which nobody is left behind. We must ensure that in our quest to build economic wealth we also build social, environmental, and cultural wealth.

Our Government must always be mindful of the needs of the most vulnerable in our society and must ensure that quality social services are available and accessible to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. To ensure our Government is meeting this need, a Gender-Based Plus Analysis must be integrated into all policies and proposals.

I call on you and every other Newfoundlander and Labradorian to join me in my commitment to make a difference for our province. Together, we will harness our collective strengths and build a better and brighter future for this province.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Furey', written over a circular stamp or seal.

**DR. ANDREW FUREY**  
Premier