

Address to the Nunatsiavut Assembly  
**President Johannes Lampe**  
Hopedale, Nunatsiavut  
March 2024



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- Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
  - I want to welcome everyone back to Hopedale for our first session of the new year. I would like to extend a warm welcome to David Dicker Jr., who was elected as Ordinary Member for Nain in January and sworn in as a member of this Assembly shortly thereafter. Congratulations, David, on your election, and welcome to your first sitting of the Assembly.
  - This is an important time for Labrador Inuit and Labrador Inuit communities. We are all here today to work together for the benefit of Labrador Inuit. It is only by working together that we can achieve our goals and make a positive difference in the lives of our people.
  - As we begin this session, let us remember that we are all here for the same purpose: to serve Labrador Inuit. Let us work together with respect, honesty, and integrity to achieve our common goals.

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- Mr. Speaker, I, along with First Minister Williams, joined Federal Housing Advocate Marie-Josée Houle in St. John's in January for a meeting with Premier Andrew Furey, Housing Minister Paul Pike and the CEO of Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, Julia Mullaley, to discuss the dire need to find solutions to the housing crisis in Labrador Inuit communities.
  - The meeting came on the heels of the Advocate Observational Report on Inuit Housing, released this past November 28, which affirms what we have been saying for decades: that the right of Inuit to adequate housing is being violated.
  - The Federal Housing Advocate has a legislated duty under the National Housing Strategy Act to engage with “rights holders,” or people whose human right to adequate housing has been violated, such as those who are unhoused or precariously housed.
  - Under this mandate, the Advocate travelled to Nain and Hopedale in October 2022 to listen, observe, and bear witness to the housing challenges being faced by Labrador Inuit.

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- The recommendations in the Advocate’s report on Inuit Housing in Nunatsiavut may be staggering to many, but we are not surprised; it’s nothing new to us. We have been saying for many years that we have a housing crisis – no, a public health crisis – in Nunatsiavut.
- During our meeting, Mr. Speaker, we called on the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to take the recommendations in the Report seriously, and to work with the Government of Canada and the Nunatsiavut Government to advance this file. While no firm commitments were given, we have agreed to explore the establishing of a working group between our respective governments, and to hold further talks on ways to address the issues and concerns outlined in the report.
- We also extended an invitation to Premier Furey and Minister Pike to “come see” first-hand the conditions in which some of our people live. The Minister has taken us up on his offer, and is scheduled – along with staff at Newfoundland and Labrador Housing – to visit Nain on March 25.
- As I noted, the Advocate’s report, which also looks into housing conditions in Nunavut, was released during a media conference held at the National Press Gallery in Ottawa. I was pleased to join the Housing Advocate, as well as NTI President Aluki Kotierk, at the media conference.
- Following the release of the report, we met with federal government officials and re-iterated the need to find solutions to this serious crisis.
- A meeting with Minister Vandal, Minister Anandasangaree, Minister Anand, and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities, Peter Fragiskatos, was positive with a commitment to explore the report’s recommendations in detail with the Nunatsiavut Government and NTI.
- Engagement on the report included meetings with Senator Patterson and MP Lori Idlout.
- We welcome the engagement of both the federal government on this issue, and we look forward to continued productive discussions.

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- Mr. Speaker, the Nunatsiavut Government continues to express disagreement and opposition towards the NunatuKavut Community Council’s claims of Indigenous rights and self-government.
  - NCC has no legitimacy or credibility as an Inuit organization, and its attempts to claim Inuit rights and status are an insult to Labrador Inuit and other true Inuit of Canada.

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- Inuit are united by our common ancestry, history, culture, and language. We have a strong sense of identity and kinship, and we know who we are and where we belong. We will not tolerate any attempts by NCC, or any other non-Indigenous group, to appropriate our identity.
  - We expect there will be more attention brought to this issue in the coming weeks.
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- During ITK's Ta Board of Directors meeting in Ottawa this past December, we approved a series of recommendations that will guide the next steps in the development of an Inuit Nunangat University. This work includes the determination of location and academic programming, as well the creation of an interim governance body tasked with drafting bylaws, operation policies and the legislation that will ultimately govern the institution.
  - We also approved ITK's Strategic Plan for 2024-2028. The plan sets out ITK's work under seven priority areas, including: strengthening Inuit self-governance; improving access to education and health services; Inuktitut revitalization, maintenance and promotion; and continuing to close the Inuit Nunangat infrastructure gap.
  - We also decided on an Inuktitut Costing Analysis and Funding Model, a method of structuring funding distribution for Inuktitut-language programs and initiative. This work is designed to promote equity and to ensure federal investment is reaching Inuit communities based on their needs.
  - In 2023-2024, Mr. Speaker, Inuktitut language funding from Canadian Heritage was approximately \$23 million. The Inuktitut costing analysis informed ITK's 2024 Pre-Budget submission, which seeks \$1 billion over 10 years for Inuktitut reclamation, revitalization and maintenance.
  - We also adopted a definition for an Inuit business located outside of Inuit Nunangat for the purpose of government procurement. The federal government has committed to ensuring at least five per cent of its contracts are awarded to Indigenous businesses.
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- In conclusion, I just want to say that I am humbled and grateful for the tremendous support and trust that you, my colleagues in the Nunatsiavut Assembly, and Beneficiaries of our great land, have placed in me as President. It has been a privilege to serve, and I am deeply thankful for the opportunities and challenges that have come my way during my time in office.

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- As the upcoming presidential election approaches on May 7, I find myself thinking about the path ahead. If my health permits, which it does at this moment, and after thoughtful discussions with my wife, I intend to seek another term as President. Regardless of the outcome, I want to thank you for the unwavering encouragement and support you have given me throughout my term and over the years.
- It's been a pleasure to be part of a team that leads our government towards a brighter future for all Nunatsiavummiut.
- Thank you Mr. Speaker.