



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-01736**

BY: **Ms. DABRUSIN (TORONTO—DANFORTH)**

DATE: **OCTOBER 23, 2017**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **DON RUSNAK**

Response by the Minister of Indigenous Services

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Drinking water

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Minister of Indigenous Services would like to thank the petitioners for expressing their concerns regarding access to safe drinking water for all Canadians and will respond as it relates to safe drinking water in First Nations communities.

First Nations should expect, as do all Canadians, access to safe, clean and reliable drinking water. It will never be possible to truly renew the nation-to-nation relationship with First Nations until First Nation communities in Canada are able to turn on their taps and drink the water. The Government of Canada is moving forward with a long-term strategy to address important water and wastewater infrastructure issues in First Nations communities.

Budget 2016 made significant investments in water and wastewater infrastructure to address health and safety concerns and ensure proper facility operation and maintenance. It also included a commitment to end long-term drinking water advisories on reserves within 5 years; by March 2021.

Progress continues to be made in addressing long-term drinking water advisories. Since Budget 2016, \$733.2 million has been provided to support 348 water and wastewater projects in 275 communities serving approximately 275,000 people. Since November 2015, 26 long-term drinking water advisories have been lifted. The Department has an Action Plan in place to eliminate the remaining advisories by March 2021.

Eliminating long-term drinking water advisories is just one measure to ensure communities have access to safe drinking water that protects the health and safety of their residents. The Government's longer-term plan includes working in full partnership with First Nation communities to improve the quality of drinking water on reserve, including developing First Nations-led approaches to sustainable drinking water management.