



## Northumberland Chapter

April 1, 2020

Chrystia.Freeland@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario

Good Day Ms Freeland:

While we commend your commitment to public service, we are distressed to learn that you are rejecting the request from Manitoba First Nations for Cuban doctors to bolster healthcare services in their communities in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. We ask that you review/ rescind your decision for the following reasons.

The Cuban health teams are well trained professionals with many of their medical practitioners having had past experience in countering Ebola, Dengue fever, and other recent epidemics. Cuban health teams have already answered the call from ten countries in Europe, Africa and the Americas. The presence of a Cuban health care team in Canada at this critical juncture can help save lives, and this is what we all want.

The shortage of health resources in First Nation communities is well-documented. As Manitoba Southern Chiefs Organization's (SCO) Jerry Daniels has explained, "Canada does not have enough health care workers to mitigate the spread of Covid-19 and to address the numbers of upcoming cases in First Nation communities."

The First Nations are making a concrete, practical proposal. The Canadian medical services, good as they are, are nevertheless being stretched thin to cover the Covid-19 cases multiplying in Canada's more populous South.

Please support the Manitoba First Nations' request to supply visas for Cuban health workers and thus buttress the efforts against Covid-19 in First Nation communities.

Yours sincerely,

Rick Arnold

Northumberland Chapter of the Council of Canadians Executive member  
784 Packer Road, Roseneath, ON. K0K 2X0. rickarnold@xplornet.com

Cc: Chief Dave Mowat - Alderville First Nation, dmowat@alderville.ca  
MP Philip Lawrence - Northumberland-Peterborough South, Philip.Lawrence@parl.gc.ca  
MPP David Piccini - Northumberland-Peterborough South, davidpiccinimpp.ca