

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
Newfoundland and Labrador

JIM BENNETT, M.H.A.
District of St. Barbe

January 6, 2012

Department of Innovation, Business and Rural Development
Confederation Building
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, Newfoundland
A1B 4J6
Attention: Keith Hutchings, Minister

Dear Minister:

Re: Broadband/High Speed Internet St. Barbe District

Thank you for your response on December 22 to my letter dated to you on December 8. Your response as well as your announcement of upgrades to the existing broadband service to the province is most welcome at this time. However, as you may appreciate, many communities appear to remain unserved after this new initiative has been completed. In many cases the satisfaction expressed by those who will receive improved services has been offset by the dissatisfaction of those who appear to have been left out of this announcement.

I therefore make this request of you in my capacity as the Member of the House of Assembly for St. Barbe District and as Opposition critic for your department:

- i. Regarding the announced improvements to various communities;
 - a. kindly provide the exact communities that will receive the improved service; and
 - b. the time table for when you expect this work to be completed.
- ii. Please provide a list of the communities without broadband service that will not be included in this initiative and their approximate distance from the nearest community that will receive the improved broadband service. I need this information so that I may request from industry sources the approximate cost to extend the service to towns that are adjacent to towns not being given the new service as this may be available at a small additional cost.

- iii. Kindly advise the name of the intended Broadband provider to provide these services as well as the name of the contractor or contractors who will install the upgraded services.

- iv. Is there still an opportunity to make representations to your department to have additional funds made available to provide increased services to additional communities?

- v. Is your department willing to enter into a discussion to determine if any of the services that are proposed to be provided by the intended broadband carrier could actually be carried out by different carriers at a lower cost so as to free up funds for additional service in other communities?

Please provide this information at your earliest convenience as several communities in St. Barbe District have been left out of the announcement and the constituents are very angry. Therefore, it only stands to reason that other communities in the province have been left out of this initiative and are expressing the same level of outrage at being left out. It would be most helpful and constructive if their needs could be accommodated.

Yours truly,

Jim Bennett MHA
St. Barbe District