

**Ministry of Community
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**Ministère des Services
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To: Mayors of Member Municipalities / TWOMO Representative, District of Cochrane

Dear Sirs / Madams,

I am writing further to my ministry's earlier communications regarding issues raised by the District of Cochrane Social Services Administration Board members as it relates to the cost apportionment formula under the District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSAB) Act. I understand from my officials that this has become an increasingly challenging situation that may hinder the DSSAB's ability to serve the best interests of all people living in the Cochrane district.

I wanted to share the government's perspective that the DSSAB Act, in setting out a default apportionment formula of weighted assessment, is aimed at supporting a fair approach to the sharing of costs within a district. This approach expressly delinks levies from service usage, in recognition that sharing costs across a district with due regard to ability to pay is essential to support and sustain equitable access to social services in all communities. While the Act allows for an alternative model, the implicit assumption is that any alternative should not create an untenable imbalance in cost among member areas that could compromise (or destabilize) access to services for the people of Northern Ontario.

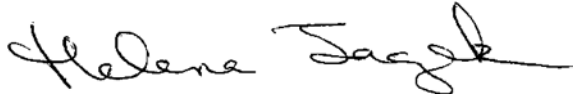
As you know, we have committed to undertaking a review that aims to look at the various governance and accountability issues that our northern partners have identified. Allowing the opportunity for this process to be completed with recommendations on how to best move forward in respect of the DSSAB construct on the whole would be most helpful. To this end, foregoing fundamental changes to the default apportionment may be the most prudent course of action in order to avoid situations of inability to pay, and a resulting need to reduce DSSAB services in order to operate within available levies. It is important to recognize that my ministry would not be in the position to provide additional funding to the Cochrane DSSAB to address this circumstance, should it arise.

I understand from my ministry that board members and staff have a long history of collaborating with integrity and fairness and acting in the best interest of all communities and citizens you serve.

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We look forward to engaging with you in the review process and trust you will exercise your decision-making authority with a full understanding of the implications for the board and district as a whole.

Sincerely,



Dr. Helena Jaczek
Minister

- c. The Honourable Bill Mauro, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Minister of Northern Development and Mines
- The Honourable Charles Souza, Minister of Finance
- (Additional) Cochrane DSSAB Board Members
- Janet Menard, Deputy Minister, MCSS
- Richard Steele, Assistant Deputy Minister, MCSS
- Erin Hannah, Assistant Deputy Minister, MCSS
- Brian Marks, Chief Administrative Officer, CDSSAB
- Gilles Bisson, MPP, Timmins - James Bay
- John Vanthof, MPP, Timiskaming—Cochrane

