

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF CANADA

February 7, 2008

Dear Prime Minister:

Re: First Nations Technical Institute

We are writing to ***strongly urge*** the federal government and federal Indians Affairs Minister Chuck Strahl to reverse the decision to cut funding to the First Nations Technical Institute by 66 per cent.

This aboriginal owned and controlled post-secondary educational institution offers university, college, and adult education programs and its graduates have a 90 per cent employment rate.

Normally, there is little coordination in education funding between federal and provincial governments. This is definitely the exception, and it requires Minister Strahl and the province of Ontario to come together to assure that this aboriginal educational success story continues.

In 1985 federal, provincial, and aboriginal governments did the right thing when they acted together, putting aboriginal youth first and creating this successful enterprise. The fact that it does not conform to rigid guidelines established to govern other post-secondary institutions is not a negative, and it should not be penalized for that. It is obviously unique, but it works and it works well.

We exhort the federal government and the Ontario government not to drop the ball on this issue. We need to keep the First Nations Technical Institute up and running, and we need more just like it.

Sincerely,

Karen Dempsey, NCWC President

cc: Indian Affairs Minister Chuck Strahl
Premier Dalton McGinty
Minister Michael Bryant, MPP Ontario