October 26, 2015

The Honourable Kathleen Wynne
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Queens Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1
premier@ontario.ca

Dear Premier Wynne:

RE: Northern Ontario Evacuations of First Nations Communities

At its meeting held on October 21, 2015, the Board of Health for the Perth District Health Unit considered correspondence forwarded and supported by Peterborough County-City Health Unit (also referencing Sudbury District Board of Health, and the Thunder Bay District Board of Health) regarding evacuations of First Nations communities in Northern Ontario.

The member municipalities of the Perth District Health Unit received evacuees from the James Bay area in 2008. The Board of Health remains deeply concerned that the First Nations communities of the James Bay Coast and Northwestern Ontario continue to require close to annual evacuation due to seasonal flooding and forest fires.

The Board of Health for the Perth District Health Unit supports the recommendation to address the ongoing lack of resources and infrastructure to ensure the safe, efficient and effective temporary relocation of First Nations communities in Northwestern Ontario and the James Bay coast when they face environmental and weather related threats in the form of seasonal floods and forest fires.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Teresa Barresi, Chair
Board of Health, Perth District Health Unit

TB/mr

Cc: Hon. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Hon. Yasir Naqvi, Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services
Hon. David Zimmer, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs
Hon. Michael Gravelle, Minister of Northern Development and Mines
Hon. Bill Mauro, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry
Linda Stewart, Executive Director, Association of Local Public Health Agencies
MPP Randy Pettapiece
Ontario Boards of Health