



Mr. Robert Varney
Chair, Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC)
Commission for Environmental Cooperation
393 St-Jacques Street West, Suite 200
Montreal, Quebec
H2Y 1N9

Dear Mr. Varney:

On behalf of the Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) and the Alternate Representatives, I would like to thank the Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) for its *Advice to Council 14-01* regarding the JPAC-led public workshop on “Building Healthy and Sustainable Homes in Remote Communities.” The advice and recommendations will be very useful as Council continues to develop its 2015-2020 Strategic Plan.

Firstly, we would like to commend the JPAC for hosting a very successful meeting and for incorporating such a diverse range of perspectives into its proceedings. This is an important topic to all Parties and it is clear from JPAC’s advice that a wide number of views, on behalf of citizens from across North America, are represented. We further recognize JPAC’s hard work to ensure that these views are accurately communicated to Council.

With respect to your observations, we agree that there are many opportunities to build healthy and sustainable housing in remote communities, particularly in local and Indigenous communities. The links you have identified between healthy and sustainable housing and considerations of water availability, conservation, and responsible use, are compelling and speak to the need to develop a more encompassing approach to the topic. We look forward to exploring these opportunities in greater detail as we develop the next Strategic Plan.

We also agree that the 2013-2014 CEC Operational Plan has some very relevant projects related to this topic. We look forward to seeing the final results of these projects upon their completion and incorporating the lessons-learned into future CEC work.

We are pleased to note that the public dialogue was helpful in advancing broader public awareness on this topic and that civil society was able to provide insight on how best to overcome obstacles to achieving healthy and sustainable housing. As you are aware, Council supports the need to include Indigenous traditional knowledge into our respective governments’ work. Learning from these



groups will be an important theme in the CEC's new priorities for 2015-2020 and, going forward, this theme will be increasingly reflected in the CEC's work.

Council welcomes your recommendations that the CEC continue its work to advance a more integrated concept of sustainable housing, to emphasize the long-term savings that energy and water-efficient housing can bring, and to identify energy and water risk opportunities for adaptation. Council is already considering areas where this work can be further implemented as it readies its new priorities for 2015-2020. Incorporating your recommendations will help ensure that the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan is effective in dealing with issues of concern to the North American public.

Once again, Council would like to thank the JPAC for its valuable advice regarding the important topic of healthy and sustainable housing. Your efforts to engage with the citizens of North America and to bring their concerns to the attention of the CEC are sincerely appreciated by Council. We look forward to working with the JPAC and the CEC Secretariat to find ways of incorporating this advice into the CEC's 2015-2020 Strategic Plan and in future Operational Plans.

Sincerely,



on behalf of/

Dan McDougall, Alternate Representative for Canada

c.c. Mr. Enrique Lendo, Alternate Representative for Mexico
Ms. Jane Nishida, Alternate Representative for the United States
Irasema Coronado, CEC Executive Director
Marcela Orozco, JPAC Liaison Officer