
Policy Matters: Navarana Beveridge

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Later this year, Canadians will vote in the 43rd federal election. Many non-profit organizations, networks, and coalitions see elections as a critical opportunity to raise relevant public policy issues. Recently, the rules for charities engaging in public policy have become a prominent source of debate and discussion in government and the sector. As we countdown to the next election, The Philanthropist [is asking non-profit leaders](#) what public policy issues are top of mind for them.

Name and organization: Navarana Beveridge, Qikiqtani Inuit Association

What current election issues might impact your work?

The high cost of living in the Inuit Nunangat is an important issue that affects all aspects of life in Canada's North.

Nearly 70% of Nunavut Inuit experience food insecurity. Not having enough nutritious food can have negative impacts on physical and mental health, resulting in higher rates of heart disease, diabetes, and depression.

Food insecurity in Nunavut means more than 1,700 children do not have any food for at least one day each year. This impacts children's cognitive, academic, and physiological development.

For Inuit, the effects of food insecurity also extend to cultural wellbeing because of the centrality to our culture. Initiatives, such as the Nutrition North Program, which provides subsidies to imported food, are not working.

At the Qikiqtani Inuit Association we are striving to change the dialogue from food security to food sovereignty so we can empower Inuit to feed our own communities.

What issues would you like to bring more attention to in the election?

Inuit are still living the legacy of colonialism. Our communities are disproportionately impacted by income disparity, lack of housing, and inadequate access to healthcare, to name a few. These factors create barriers to achieving social and economic success.

To turn the tide, we must address the disparity between the North and the south and invest in the Inuit Nunangat. The Government of Canada's Arctic Policy Framework offers an opening for a dialogue on what is needed for a better future. At Qikiqtani Inuit Association, we have engaged in this dialogue advocating for long-term, adequate, stable funding that can start to bridge the social and economic gaps.

Recently, we finalized several agreements in relation to marine protection in the Qikiqtani region. These agreements not only protect the environment but also address the infrastructure deficit in the High Arctic, a blueprint for how working in partnership can benefit all Canadians.

Where can we learn more about these issues?

To learn more about Qikiqtani Inuit Association's work visit our website qia.ca. You can learn more about our position on various policy issues at: qia.ca/documents.