

Once Again!

Federal Budget Ignores Non-reserve Aboriginal Housing Crisis

Ottawa, February 23, 2005: “Once again, the federal government has ignored the housing crisis facing non-reserve Aboriginal communities,” says Charlie Hill, President of the National Aboriginal Housing Association. “We are pleased to see that the government will increase funding by \$295 million over five years for new housing and housing repairs on First Nation reserves, but are shocked that the federal government has done nothing to address the crisis in non-reserve Aboriginal communities.” The National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations had asked the government for \$1 billion annually in new spending just to address the serious backlog in new housing and housing repair on First Nation reserves.

The situation is just as bad off-reserve. Over 70% of Canada's Aboriginal population now live in non-reserve areas, many in towns and cities and the north. By the federal government's own analysis, one in four (24.8%) of these Aboriginal households are in core housing need, and 32.5% of Aboriginal renters paid more than 30% of their income for shelter.

“The housing crisis is devastating our urban and northern communities. Federal spending in areas such as health, early childhood education and youth, without ensuring safe, affordable and stable housing, is misguided,” adds Hill. “Without a safe, quiet place to study, to do homework, our children will never catch-up. As long as overcrowding and the risk of becoming homeless exists, our communities will continue to live on the margins” says the President of the National Aboriginal Housing Association, a non-political non-profit national organization representing Aboriginal housing providers across Canada.

For more information, visit NAHA/ANHA's web page at www.aboriginalhousing.org or contact:

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