June 25, 2008

The Honourable David Caplan
Minister – Minister’s Office
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Hepburn Block, 10th Floor
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, ON M7A 2C4

Dear Minister Caplan:

Subject: Request for an Extension of 100% Funding for Small Drinking Water Systems

In the spring of 2007, the government passed the Health Services Improvements Act which provided for the transfer of legislative responsibility for five categories of non-residential and seasonal residential drinking-water systems from the Ministry of Environment to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Provincial funding support for the Small Drinking Water Systems is being provided on a 100% basis for start-up activities, including an initial planning period followed by a two-year period of conducting the initial site-specific risk assessments. Following the initial implementation, the cost is expected to be cost-shared with member municipalities by the year 2010.

The Board of Health for the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit is requesting that the Small Drinking Water Systems program remain funded at 100%. If this program was still under the Ministry of Environment it would be 100% provincially funded. Most of these Small Drinking Water Systems are in northern and rural Ontario and many have a decreasing tax base. This will put yet further burden on the local property tax base.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Mae Bain, Chairperson
Board of Health

Copied to: 1) North Bay Parry Sound District Member Municipalities (31)  
2) Ontario Boards of Health 
3) Linda Stewart, Executive Director, Association of Local Public Health Agencies 
4) Peter Jekel, Director of Environmental Health, North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit