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**Charlie Angus**

Member of Parliament for Timmins - James Bay  
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The Honourable Navdeep Bains  
Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry  
C.D. Howe Building  
235 Queen Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H5  
Email: ISI.minister-ministre.ISI@canada.ca

September 29, 2020

Re: SpaceX's CRTC rural internet application.

Dear Minister Bains,

COVID has revealed the massive digital gap across Canada and nowhere is this problem more serious than in the rural north. During the lockdown many families who had to home school their children or work from home were forced to pay outrageous fees by the Telecoms. Other families were simply unable to access online services at all. This is why I am surprised at the slow response to the Space Exploration Technology Corp's (SpaceX) Starlink application for a Basic International Telecommunication Service (BITS) licence.

SpaceX's plans to have satellite-based internet could help fill some of the significant gaps in data coverage. I note that they have received strong support from the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) because this will help people in the rural north access internet. The second wave is now upon us and it is essential that the government gets serious about dealing with the digital divide. This includes ensuring proper competition in the high-speed internet market in rural Canada.

Canadians are looking for this government to move beyond talk and put in place a credible plan for linking up rural and northern homes. As part of this, the SpaceX proposal could play an important role. I hope that you will join us in our push to have the actual infrastructure for a high-speed connection through all of Canada. Only then can we ensure that we bring true digital equality to all Canadians.

Sincerely,

Charlie Angus, Member of Parliament  
Timmins-James Bay