



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Paul Manly

Member of Parliament
Nanaimo-Ladysmith

February 25th, 2020

The Honourable Catherine McKenna, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Infrastructure and Communities
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister McKenna,

Thank you for taking the time to have a brief discussion with me in the House of Commons about infrastructure funding for healthcare facilities.

HealthCareCAN, which represents hospitals and health care organizations across the country, has identified the upgrading of healthcare infrastructure as a key action that is currently missing from Canada's climate strategy. Hospitals account for 11% of public infrastructure energy usage nationally, and 5% of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions.

Our hospitals must operate in disaster conditions -- fires, floods, earthquakes, and viral outbreaks -- all of which will be exacerbated by climate change. Currently, hospital and health care organizations are ineligible for federal funding from the *Building Canada* fund, the *Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation* fund, and the *Knowledge in Infrastructure* fund.

I believe this needs to change. It is time for the federal government to put funding into this crucial part of our infrastructure to make sure that our hospitals and health care facilities are resilient, and prepared for disaster and disaster mitigation.

Ottawa

Room 313, Confederation Building
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6
Tel.: 613-992-5243
Fax.: 613-992-9112

Paul.Manly@parl.gc.ca

Constituency

Suite 103, 495 Dunsmuir Street
Nanaimo, British Columbia V9R 6B9
Tel.: 250-734-6400
Fax.: 250-734-6404

Beyond the need for disaster preparedness, upgrading our hospitals presents some relatively easy opportunities to reduce GHG emissions. For example, I have been told by anesthesiologists that the anesthetic gases they use are 100's of times more potent as greenhouse gases than CO2. Implementing systems to capture these gases when they are used is one such opportunity.

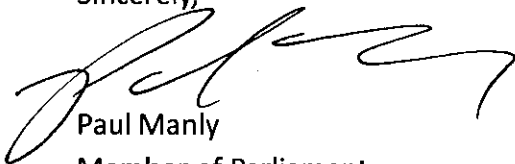
I know that you are well-versed on the climate impact of aging infrastructure. HealthCareCAN noted in a recent report that we have a \$15 billion dollar deficit with respect to maintaining Canada's hospitals, and that 69% of hospitals in our cities are over 50 years old. The Nanaimo Regional General Hospital in my riding of Nanaimo-Ladysmith is a prime example.

NRGH was constructed in 1963, and is the designated regional referral hospital for communities on Vancouver Island north of Victoria. It is overcrowded, has the busiest emergency department on Vancouver Island, and serves the oldest per capita population in Canada. It serves a larger population than the two hospitals in the greater Victoria area, but it cannot provide the specialized services, such as cancer and cardiac care. These challenges have resulted in a highly stressful work environment, and the hospital administration has struggled to attract and retain doctors, nurses and other health care professionals. NRGH urgently needs to be expanded and upgraded to a tertiary hospital.

Our situation is not unique, but it clearly illustrates the need for increased access to infrastructure funding for health care facilities. I know that the provinces set the priorities, but an influx of federal funding would get much-needed projects moving. The opportunity exists to not only improve the delivery of health care, but to lower the carbon footprint of hospitals as we build for the future needs of our communities.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts about green infrastructure funding for the health care system.

Sincerely,



Paul Manly
Member of Parliament
Nanaimo-Ladysmith

cc

The Honourable Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Health