

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA INDIAN CHIEFS

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January 5, 2016

The Honourable Carolyn Bennett
Minister, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
10 Wellington Street
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0H4

Dear Minister Bennett:

We write to follow up on our November 24, 2015 letter asking you to communicate your government's intentions regarding an immediate restoration of specific claims research funding to claims research units (CRUs) and First Nations.

We also draw your attention to 50 letters and emails of support calling for specific claims research funding to be restored to previous levels. A list of endorsements is appended here and the letters themselves will be forwarded to you under separate cover. These letters represent almost 450 First Nations across Canada.

We respectfully remind you that the deadline for all CRUs and First Nations seeking annual specific claims research funding for the 2016-2017 fiscal year is January 15, 2016. We request that you inform us as to whether research funding levels will be restored as soon as possible so that we may inform the Indigenous communities for whom we conduct research what they may expect regarding progress on their claims and so that we may plan accordingly.

We reiterate that your government has stated that a meaningful reconciliation process requires at the very least that Canada fulfills its past promises as a concrete demonstration of good faith and the honour of the Crown. Immediate restoration of research funding will demonstrate clearly the seriousness of your government's commitment and will allow First Nations access to justice previously promised and denied.

We await your timely response.

On behalf of the UNION OF BC INDIAN CHIEFS

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip
President

Chief Robert Chamberlin
Vice-President

Kukpi7 Judy Wilson
Secretary-Treasurer

CC: Jody Wilson-Raybould, Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Colleen Swords, Deputy Minister, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
Chief Maureen Chapman, Chair, BC Specific Claims Working Group
UBCIC Chiefs Council
National Chief Perry Bellegarde, Assembly of First Nations
AFN Chiefs Committee on Claims
BC Assembly of First Nations
First Nations Summit
BC First Nations
Federal Cabinet