

# FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

## News Release

November 26, 2019

### First Nations Leadership Council Statement: Call for Support and Passage of Bill 41

(X̣ẉṃə̣θ̣ḳẉə̣ỵəm (Musqueam), Ṣḳẉx̣ẉụ́7̣mesh (Squamish) and ṣə̣ḷiḷẉə̣ṭạʔ̣4/ṣə̣ḷiḷẉiṭuḷh (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) is tremendously supportive of the NDP Government's introduction of Bill 41: *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, which represents a significant step forward in Crown-Indigenous relations in British Columbia. We are deeply concerned that the progression of Bill 41 is being jeopardized through delay at the Committee stage.

Bill 41 was co-developed by the Province and the FNLC as a critical and key action item on reconciliation. The FNLC organizations were mandated by First Nations in BC to advance a legislative framework for the implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* ("the Declaration"), as a part of a coherent path for reconciliation and improved relations. Bill 41 was introduced in the Legislature on October 24<sup>th</sup> by the Government with unprecedented ceremony, with full FNLC support and participation, and supportive statements of all political parties.

The Bill went to Second Reading on October 30<sup>th</sup> and is now at Committee, where there have been over 20 hours devoted to reviewing the Bill so far. The FNLC is concerned that, rather than asking substantive questions about the Bill itself, the Liberals are analyzing individual Articles of the Declaration when the Declaration is meant to be read in its entirety, as a coherent and comprehensive human rights instrument. As is the case with other human rights instruments, the Declaration speaks to standards for respecting and upholding rights that are indivisible, interrelated and interdependent human rights, in an indigenous context. There is significant concern that the approach being taken at Committee is running out the clock and that the Bill will die on the order paper.

The FNLC is calling on the Liberals to immediately conclude their questions at the start of Committee today so that Bill 41 may move to Third Reading to ensure that it is passed and receives Royal Assent by Thursday November 28, the last day of the session. The FNLC is calling on all parties to vote unanimously in support of this important Bill and truly celebrate the recognition of the human rights of Indigenous peoples in provincial legislation.

-30-

*The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), First Nations Summit (FNS), and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC).*

#### For further information, contact:

Colin Braker, FNS: 604-328-4094  
Annette Schroeter, BCAFN: 250-962-1603  
Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, UBCIC: 250-490-5314



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
ASSEMBLY OF  
FIRST NATIONS

1004 Landooz Rd.  
Prince George, BC  
V2K 5S3

Ph: 778-945-9910  
Fx: 778-945-9916



FIRST  
NATIONS  
SUMMIT

1200-100 Park Royal South  
West Vancouver, BC  
V7T 1A2

Ph: 604-926-9903  
Fx: 604-926-9923  
Toll Free: 866-990-9939



UNION OF  
BRITISH COLUMBIA  
INDIAN CHIEFS

401 - 312 Main Street  
Vancouver, BC  
V6A 2T2

Ph: 604-684-0231  
Fx: 604-684-5726