



Nishnawbe Aski Nation

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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAN SUPPORTS NDP MOTION FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO END DISCRIMINATION AGAINST FIRST NATIONS CHILDREN

OTTAWA, ON: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum is calling on all members of parliament to support a motion that will be introduced by the New Democratic Party (NDP) this week calling on the Government of Canada to comply with the historic ruling of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal to end discrimination against First Nations children.

“This is not an issue about throwing money at a problem, but recognizing the urgent need to address the long-standing and shameful discrimination perpetuated by the Government of Canada against our children,” said Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum, who attended a press conference in Ottawa this morning. “We are calling on this government to comply with the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal order to end discrimination against First Nations children. We look to all members of parliament to do what is right for First Nations children and vote in favour of this motion.”

In its landmark ruling in January 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruled that the government discriminates against First Nations children in its delivery of child welfare services on-reserve. The Tribunal has issued two compliance orders, but the federal government has failed to act.

The precedent-setting First Nations child welfare case *First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada et al. v. Attorney General of Canada* was launched by the Assembly of First Nations and the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada in 2007. The case was brought on behalf of 163,000 children after the federal government failed to implement child welfare reforms recommended by several reports documenting inequalities in funding and access to services.

The Tribunal’s landmark decision found that the Government of Canada’s failure to provide equitable child welfare funding for vulnerable First Nations children is discriminatory. The Tribunal confirmed that the federal government is accountable for failing to provide First

Nations the same level of child welfare services as the rest of Canada, which is discriminatory and contrary to the Canadian Human Rights Act.

NAN was granted intervenor status in the Tribunal proceedings in May 2016, allowing NAN to make submissions and important contributions to remedies that will have a direct impact on the delivery of child welfare in NAN First Nations.

In September, the Tribunal recognized the importance of factoring in remoteness in the delivery of child and family services in First Nation communities within NAN territory and across Canada. It accepted NAN's vision of a "remoteness quotient" and the application of a northern remoteness factor in the immediate term - not only in Ontario, but throughout Canada.

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