



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(amiskwacîwâskahikan, Wocodaki) The Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations Chiefs are concerned that Bill-C15 will be expedited through the legislative process following the presentation of Treaty Six Chief's to the Senate Committee. The Senate Committee on Aboriginal People was tasked to do a pre-study on the Bill on May 7, 2021. Grand Chief Watchmaker, Chief Beaverbones and Chief Arcand appeared before the Senate on May 28th.

The Grand Chief is astounded on the process that Canada is using to expedite this Bill through the Senate "the role of a committee is to look at proposed Bills, provide scrutiny, and investigate issues that are important to Canadians, which is odd because the process being used for this Bill is not following the usual protocols and all Canadians should be concerned about how the legislative process is being circumvented in order to achieve political goals." said Grand Chief Watchmaker

In the case of Bill C-15, the Senate has been asked to do a pre-study of the Bill. Usually, a Bill would be studied once the Senate has gone through a second reading and had round of debate. With the case of Bill C-15, the rules are being ignored. The Treaty 6, 7 and 8 Chiefs rejected Bill C15 by resolution in assembly in March 2021.

Bill C-15 is in the second reading and because of that, it is unclear whether the committee can finish its study in time for a meaningful debate. Grand Chief Watchmaker noted that the Committee's findings may be released without any time for the Senate to do its proper diligence and have constructive debate on the issues identified during the pre-study.

Grand Chief Okimaw Watchmaker stated that "an aspect of good governance is having respect for the rules that exist and making sure that appropriate level of due diligence is completed when you are considering decisions that will have a negative impact the Treaty Rights of First Nations peoples. This Bill is attempting to alter the relationship between the Crown and Treaty people. Senator Patterson stated very clearly at the Senate Committee, proclaiming that not providing amendments to the Bill would be "...an advocacy of our duty as Parliamentarians" (Friday May 30th, 2021 APPA Committee Hearing). I agree stated the Grand Chief, "One of the core values of being a Senator is to consider proposed legislation in a thoughtful and measured way. Making requests to the Senate to not provide amendments is nothing short of a renunciation of one's duty. The Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations expect that the laws regarding the parliamentary process should be followed."

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