



HEAD OFFICE: ENOCH CREE NATION NO. 135 P.O. BOX 270, ENOCH AB T7X 3Y3

March 31, 2020

TREATY NO. 6 GRAND CHIEF STATEMENT

We are resilient. Our Ceremonies and Traditional Medicines have a major influence in our resiliency. We acknowledge our Traditions and give thanks to Nikawîynân Askîy (Mother Earth) for what she provides. However, we understand that historically First Nations People across Turtle Island have had high mortality rates with pandemics. Small Pox, Tuberculosis, and the Spanish Flu have devastated our populations and with COVID-19, we face the same measures.

Our people deserve the reassurance from the federal government that the necessary supports in response to the COVID-19 pandemic will be provided to us. As First Nations People, we are often forgotten about and usually the last to access resources. Treaty No. 6 was signed Nation to Nation, where both Nations agreed to the Medicine Chest Clause which includes Famine and Pestilence. Furthermore, we need to include the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) recommendations and the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People's (UNDRIP) recommendations on Health with our relationships with government.

Our Ancestors, the ones who acknowledged Treaty on our behalf, thought of us at this very moment in time. They foresaw the need for our People's rights to medication and health care. This was a factor that influenced our People to enter into Treaty No. 6; a promise that we would not be forgotten in times of Famine and Pestilence.

From the \$82 Billion the federal government has promised to Canadians to get through this pandemic, 0.003% or \$305 Million was announced to be allocated to First Nations People.

First Nations People make up 4.9% of the Canadian population and as such, ask for equal compensation in the amount of \$4.018 Billion dollars.

We are calling on the federal government to oblige on the promise of the Crown to the Treaty No. 6 People. This promise that was made in front of our Creator through Ospwâkan (our sacred pipe). The Medicine Chest Clause of Treaty No. 6 provides us an opportunity to keep our People healthy and safe from sickness and disease. We need reassurances and commitment from the federal government that the nurses, doctors, health professionals, and the roofs over the heads of our sick people will be there on our Nations to help when the time comes.

With better access to resources and a fair distribution of funding for our People, our Ceremonies and our Traditions will survive this pandemic.

We recognize that we are all ayisiyinowak (humans) and in this together. The initial steps taken by the federal government partners early in this crisis are steps in the right direction. But we are only just starting.

Treaty No. 6 Nations will do their part to flatten the curve, protect our lands, and uphold the principles of the Medicine Chest Clause for kakîyaw niwâkomâkanak (all our relations) and we expect the same from our Treaty partner

William (Billy) Morin
Grand Chief of the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations