



Assemblée des Premières Nations
Québec-Labrador

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COMMISSION DE LA SANTÉ ET DES SERVICES SOCIAUX
DES PREMIÈRES NATIONS DU QUÉBEC ET DU LABRADOR
FIRST NATIONS OF QUEBEC AND LABRADOR
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMISSION

NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tabling of a federal bill regarding the jurisdiction of First Nations in the field of child protection: A step closer to the self-government and self-determination of our peoples

Wendake, November 30, 2018: The Honourable Jane Philpott, Minister of Indigenous Services Canada, along with Perry Bellegarde, Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Natan Obed, President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and Clément Chartier, President of the Métis National Council, announced this morning the tabling of a bill on Indigenous child and family services and the overrepresentation of Indigenous children and youth in foster families.

This announcement supports self-government and self-determination for our peoples. This bill will address the dysfunctional child protection systems that have for too long focused on removing First Nations children from their homes and communities. “Our children have suffered too much, and they deserve the best care and support. They must grow up near their families and be able to develop in complete safety. The First Nations are in the best position to provide the safe and cultural environments our children need to succeed in life,” said Mr. Derek Montour, President of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission.

As for Ghislain Picard, Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador, he emphasized that “any proposed legislation must affirm our ancestral and treaty rights as minimum standards and provide the necessary framework for reconciliation in matters of child protection for First Nations. We agree that any legislation must include guiding principles recognizing that these elements are at the heart of any federal legislation regarding the protection of First Nations children. I will continue to work with our Chiefs to ensure the full cooperation of all levels of government.”

The legislation will need to confirm Canada's obligation to facilitate the transition from existing systems to the implementation of new First Nations governance systems. This obligation will require an effective, efficient and rights-based process to ensure that First Nations fully exercise their jurisdiction over child and family services.

It is essential for the federal and provincial governments to work closely with First Nations in Quebec, and for sustainable funding to be provided for the transformation of child protection systems and to ensure the improvement of the living conditions of First Nations children, youth and families.

About the AFNQL

The Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador is the political organization that brings together 43 Chiefs of the First Nations in Quebec and Labrador.

About the FNQLHSSC

The First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission is a non-profit organization that supports the First Nations in Quebec and Labrador in achieving their goals in terms of health, wellness, culture and self-determination.

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INFORMATION

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