



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
EMPOWERING OUR NATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AMC disappointed on the passing of Bill C-92

Treaty One Territory, MB _ Bill C-92, An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families has received Royal Assent by the Government of Canada. In solidarity with the Chiefs of Ontario, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) is disappointed to see this legislation passed without the inclusion of key amendments that would have responded to the unique circumstances and First Nation-specific rights of First Nations children.

AMC Grand Chief Arlen Dumas stated: “Despite Canada’s commitment to support First Nation-specific child welfare legislation in Manitoba, through an MOU negotiated in good faith with the AMC First Nations, the federal government now denies the force of the MOU.”

The MOU, signed in 2017, provided funding to the AMC to engage with First Nations in Manitoba to develop their own legislation in relation to First Nations children in care that was specific to the rights, interests and circumstances of First Nations children in Manitoba. AMC First Nations, led by the AMC Women’s Council and the AMC First Nations Family Advocate Office, developed the Bringing Our Children Home Act. AMC First Nations were shocked to hear of the Assembly of First Nations support for pan-Indigenous federal legislation that did not provide guaranteed funding or sufficient protections for our children from apprehensions and abuse in foster care.

During the Senate and House studies of the AFN-supported Bill C-92, the AMC advanced significant concerns about the Bill and requested substantive amendments. None of the amendments were adopted.

“We agree with the sentiments expressed by the Chiefs of Ontario, and other First Nation leaders and child welfare experts about the significant flaws with this bill that may well make things worse for First Nation children, families and communities. Without the statutory guarantee of funding, the government has set it up to fail. Without any funding commitment from the federal government for First Nations to develop their laws and policies, engage in critical training and education, and develop or improve the infrastructure and supports, the Province will be able to continue to tear our families apart. It is provincial laws, policies and practices that have created this humanitarian crisis in Manitoba. It is just one of the reasons why there are close to 9,000 First Nations children in the CFS system. The National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls has identified the over-representation of our children in foster care as a modern form of genocide. Canada should have listened to First Nations and amended or withdrawn this bill,” said Grand Chief Dumas.

“Regardless of this legislative development, First Nations in Manitoba will continue to assert their jurisdiction in the area of children and families. Bill C-92 and the Province of Manitoba cannot stop that,” concluded Grand Chief Dumas.

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