



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
EMPOWERING OUR NATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**GRAND CHIEF ARLEN DUMAS AND THE AMC CALL FOR IMMEDIATE JUSTICE REFORM IN
NORTHERN MANITOBA**

Treaty 1 Territory, Manitoba - Grand Chief Arlen Dumas and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) are supporting Court of Queen's Bench Justice Chris Martin's call for an independent, comprehensive review of the judicial system. This comes following Martin's ruling that found two people from northern First Nations had their *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* civil rights violated due to an unnecessary wait period before they could apply for bail.

In a recent meeting with the Supreme Court of Canada and Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench Chief Justices, Grand Chief Arlen Dumas cited the 'lack of coordinated communication' between the RCMP, probation services and the court system as some of the issues that need to be resolved. "We've taken a proactive approach," said **Grand Chief Arlen Dumas**. "There are many concerns that need to be addressed, but having an open dialogue means we're able to continue working on the problems together."

The accused, who were from Split Lake Cree Nation and Norway House Cree Nation, waited weeks for a bail hearing while being held in custody in Thompson, Manitoba. Neither had any previous criminal charges.

"We know there are logistical challenges in northern Manitoba, but these are longstanding issues that should have been addressed by Manitoba Justice years ago," said **Grand Chief Dumas**. "Every citizen, First Nations or not, has the right to have timely bail hearings – nobody should be waiting as long as three weeks."

"It is timely that this decision was released after our unprecedented visit with the Supreme Court and Court of Queen's Bench Justices recently," said **Grand Chief Dumas**. "I look forward to more discussion with the Judges on this, and the many other concerns that need attention in the justice system, particularly in northern Manitoba."

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About the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

The AMC was formed in 1988 by the Chiefs in Manitoba to advocate on issues that commonly affect First Nations in Manitoba. AMC is an authorized representative of 62 of the 63 First Nations in Manitoba with a total of more than 151,000 First Nation citizens in the province, accounting for approximately 12 per cent of the provincial population. AMC represents a diversity of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho / Inineu (Cree), Anishinew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.