



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 21st, 2020

Grand Chief Arlen Dumas strongly opposes Province's bid for Winnipeg as CFL Hub

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) is expressing strong opposition to the Provincial Government's bid to have the Canadian Football League (CFL) select Winnipeg as the main hub for a truncated CFL season.

AMC Grand Chief Arlen Dumas said, "Now is not the time to play games. While AMC supports a strong economy in the Province, we vehemently oppose such a blatant disregard for the major risks associated with bringing so many non-Manitobans to the Province."

"Our focus should not be on sports tourism amidst a global pandemic. While we are one of the least affected provinces in Canada by COVID-19, we want to keep it that way and not put anyone, specifically our most vulnerable people, at risk in any way, least of all for a series of football games."

"With the recent surge in COVID-19 cases in the province, it's a stark reminder that we cannot let down our guard with complacency," added the Grand Chief.

Grand Chief Dumas further added, "Half the players for the CFL come from the United States where the pandemic continues to explode at an alarming rate. This, along with the fact that there is currently an upswing in more confirmed COVID-19 cases in Manitoba and that seasonal flu is around the corner, cannot be overlooked by Manitoba as it prepares for phase 4 opening. I understand that the players will be in self-isolation and in a 'bubble' once in Winnipeg; however, this bubble can be easily popped with potentially disastrous consequences for the poor and marginalized who call Winnipeg and Manitoba home."

Grand Chief Arlen Dumas concluded, "First Nations support the CFL and have had a longstanding positive relationship with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers football club, but we are also extremely vulnerable to the effects of the pandemic because of underlying conditions; and we will not allow our Elders, youth and children to be exposed to a potential resurgence of COVID-19 due to short sighted economic priorities associated with phase 4 opening."

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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 percent of the provincial population. AMC represents a diversity of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho / Inineu (Cree), Anishininew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.