



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AMC reacts to Manitoba Provincial Budget 2021

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) issues this statement in response to, “*Budget 2021: Protecting Manitobans, Advancing Manitoba,*” (Budget 2021) presented and tabled yesterday in the Legislative Assembly by Finance Minister, the Honourable Minister Scott Fielding.

AMC Grand Chief Dumas said, “On behalf of the AMC member First Nations, I acknowledge Minister Fielding and the Province on the tabling of Budget 2021, which upon first glance, appears to be a step away from the austere and draconian omnibus budget bills of the past. I acknowledge the Minister for the commitments to Restorative Justice Initiatives for First Nations, commitments to implement the recommendations of the Brad Wall Report, for the references to Truth and Reconciliation Commission and to the ongoing issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.”

“Budget 2021 will help the Manitoba Economy to recover from COVID-19 with the announced \$2.1 billion spending on infrastructure including \$500 million for three years for the heavy construction industry. While we do not know the details of the various lines of Budget 2021, we can be assured that the overall budget of approximately \$19.44 billion is a reduction of \$500 million from last year’s budget,” said Grand Chief Dumas.

“There was reference in the budget to advancing Truth and Reconciliation through the Lake Manitoba Lake St Martin Channel Outlet infrastructure project, “by giving people back their homes and creating jobs”. First Nations look forward to further details on how this will be accomplished and on further consultation on the largest infrastructure project in the history of Manitoba.”

“First Nations welcome the investments for early learning and childcare, K-12 and post-secondary, however, we have serious concerns about Bill 64 and the potential of this legislation to infringe on First Nations’ jurisdiction over education. It is further notable that the Province is committing \$20 million to the redevelopment of Hudson’s Bay Store. Given the close ties and historic relationship between the HBC and First Nations, we are keen to learn more about the Province’s plans for repurposing this important legacy of the relationship.”

“While First Nations understand the partisan politics underpinning the Wall Report, there are some recommendations that we are interested in further discussing with the Finance Minister and are ready to hear further details of the Province’s Budget 2021 commitment to implementing the Report’s recommendations,” concluded Grand Chief Arlen Dumas.

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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 / Inineew (Cree), Anishininew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.