



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 25, 2021

The First Nations Family Advocate Office hosts a *Telling Our Truth* Event for First Nations Families impacted by the Child and Family Services System

Treaty One Territory. The Assembly of Manitoba Chief (AMC) First Nations Family Advocate Office (FNFAO) will be hosting a *Telling Our Truth* event for First Nations youth, parents, families, former youth in care and foster parents who have been impacted by the provincial Child and Family Services (CFS) system. In telling our truths, First Nations families will be emotionally, mentally, and spirituality supported.

In November of 2020, the provincial government passed section 231 of the *Budget and Implementation Tax Statutes Amendments Act (BITSA)* that ultimately targets and further harms First Nations children in care capturing their Children’s Special Allowance (CSA) that is intended to enhance their well-being. In addition, BITSA also denies First Nations and First Nations children any right to challenge Manitoba’s unlawful actions in court.

“By passing and implementing BITSA, Manitoba is only further harming the livelihood and well-being of First Nations children. If we are on a path of reconciliation with the Manitoba government, Manitoba needs to acknowledge, listen, and put in effort to improve their relationship with First Nations. Instead of protecting its own interests to the detriment of First Nations children, Manitoba needs to be accountable for supporting First Nations to address the harms for which it is historically responsible and for which it continues to perpetuate through oppressive legislation such as the omnibus BITSA bill,” stated AMC Grand Chief Arlen Dumas.

In 2014, the AMC held open citizens’ forums throughout Manitoba that informed the *Bringing Our Children Home* Report. Based on the voices of First Nations families who were directly impacted by the system, the report identified 10 recommendations to transform the provincial CFS system. Recommendation #2 called for the Establishment of a First Nations Advocate for Families.

“We know this system does not work for us, as our children continue to be disproportionately overrepresented in the CFS system with over 8,000 of the 11,000 children in care being First Nations. Since our inception as the FNFAO, we have been a mechanism that has brought light to the historical and contemporary wrong-doings that were and continue to be inflicted on our families. We know the lack of supports and outcomes for our children aging out of the CFS system are atrocious and an infringement of fundamental human rights. Our families have been suffering in silence for too long. By hosting the *Telling Our Truth* event, it is an opportunity for families to share their story and be heard,” stated Cora Morgan, First Nations Family Advocate.

To coincide with the AMC court hearing on the BITSA challenge, the FNFAO will be hosting the *Telling Our Truths* event starting October 26, 2021, with a ceremony outside the Manitoba Law Courts. From October 26 to the 28, 2021, the FNFAO will be set up at the Manitoba legislative building for families to come and share their experience and be supported in a safe space. More information is available on the FNFAO website and social media platforms.

For more information, please contact:

Stacia Franz

Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

Email: sfranz@manitobachiefs.com

Phone: [204-292-1504](tel:204-292-1504)

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