

**ASSEMBLY OF  
MANITOBA CHIEFS**



*“This bill is contrary to First Nations’ rights to protect and defend lands and waters in their traditional territories.”*

**Bill 57 – The Protection of Critical Infrastructure Act**

Sponsored by the Honourable Mr. Friesen, Minister of Justice and Attorney General

First Reading: November 2, 2020

No update

Royal Assent: N/A

**About the bill**

- Bill 57 sets higher fines and possible imprisonment for people interfering with “critical infrastructure.”
- The owner or operator of the infrastructure would be able to apply for a court order to create a temporary protection zone.
- “Critical infrastructure” includes oil/natural gas pipelines and provincial highways.

**How the bill affects First Nations**

- This bill is in response to First Nations protest camps and blockades. It could result in imprisonment for people who participate in protests that block what the provincial government deems to be “critical infrastructure.”

**AMC’s position on the bill**

- The AMC ECC opposed this bill as part of the current suite of legislation because of the lack of consultation and the effects on First Nations and their rights.
- This bill is contrary to First Nations’ rights to protect and defend lands and waters in their traditional territories.
- This bill is similar to the Alberta government’s *Critical Infrastructure Defence Act* that is currently being challenged in the Alberta Court of Queen’s Bench based on a breach of a number of Charter rights.

**AMC activities on the bill**

- The AMC is currently monitoring the status of this bill and the constitutional challenge in Alberta.
- The AMC Secretariat has registered the AMC to appear at Committee, and will develop submissions for the presentation.

