



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **AMC RESPONDS TO THE MANITOBA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS AMENDMENTS TO THE CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT**

**Treaty One Territory, Manitoba** - The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) calls on the provincial government to work with First Nations before any amendment to the *Child and Family Services Act* (CFS Act) related to First Nations' jurisdiction.

"The AMC has been clear and direct; government officials must support First Nations led jurisdiction over children and families. To be legislated under the realms of the provincial government only provides an illusion of First Nations jurisdiction. We refuse to continue taking on an oppressive system and genocidal policies that have destroyed our families, lands, and Nations," said AMC Acting Grand Chief Cornell McLean, Lake Manitoba First Nations.

The proposed amendment to the CFS Act includes providing information for Indigenous Governing Bodies (IGB) and Indigenous Service Providers (ISP); authorizing the transfer of responsibility to IGB; accessing the Child and Family Services Information System (CFSIS) and Child Abuse Registry and protecting certain information under the CFS Act.

"Reconciliation is not about dictation and permitting First Nations to have access to their citizen's information. As First Nations, we have the inherent right to care for and provide for our children in ways reflective of our laws and ways of being. To continue a piecemeal approach under the federal legislation, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth, and families*, only further empowers the provincial government to control child welfare service for First Nations families," said Acting Grand Chief McLean.

Since enacting the 2019 federal legislation, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Metis children, youth, and families*, the AMC has been advocating for a Manitoba First Nations specific approach to reforming the child welfare system. "When the Act was first introduced, we knew there were going to be challenges because First Nations are to enter into coordination agreements with both levels of government. If the federal government wants to honour its nation-to-nation relationship with First Nations, there is no need for provincial influence," said Acting Grand Chief McLean.

"With the highest number of First Nations children in care, it is imperative that First Nations guide the process of restoring jurisdiction and reclaiming our inherent laws respecting children and families. We call on Manitoba to fulfill its commitments to First Nations self-determination by supporting our Nations as we lead the way forward," said Acting Grand Chief McLean.



**For more information, please contact:**

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