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MKO Grand Chief Garrison Settee Statement on the Tabling of Bill C-92 An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit, Metis Children and Families

PRESS RELEASE

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Treaty One Territory, Winnipeg, MB. Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Grand Chief Garrison Settee issued the following statement today in response to the first reading of Bill C-92, An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Children and Youth and Families.

"I am cautiously optimistic with today's introduction of Bill C-92, said Grand Chief Settee. I commend the outstanding work of Jane Philpott, the former Indigenous Services Minister, on the child welfare file, and thank the current Minister, Seamus O'Regan, for introducing the Bill in the House of Commons today. At the press conference with the national Indigenous organizations and government officials following the introduction of the Bill there were many platitudes and congratulatory messages conveyed. However, MKO is looking forward to conducting further due diligence, and further engagement if necessary, to ensure that the voices of the MKO leadership and families are reflected in the Bill. There still remain serious obstacles to overcome before implementation of the Bill. I remain concerned with the timelines for royal assent, with the Treasury Board funding process and with support for the Bill from the Senate," said Grand Chief Settee.

Grand Chief Settee continued, "I am most concerned, however, with reluctant provinces, including Manitoba, that may not agree with provisions in the Bill, which have been shared with MKO, that affirm the rights and jurisdiction of First Nations over child welfare matters. "MKO looks forward to continuing discussions with the Manitoba government in the context of the current federal and provincial child welfare legislative measures, and how we can arrive at a bilateral or tripartite agreement, or Accord, that would recognize northern Manitoba First Nations rights and jurisdiction over Child Welfare," concluded the MKO Grand Chief.

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~Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. is a non-profit, political advocacy organization that has represented 30 First Nation communities in Manitoba's North since 1981~