



## Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

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For immediate release  
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### **MKO supports the creation of National Ribbon Skirt Day**

**Treaty Five Territory, Winnipeg, MB** – Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) supports the creation of National Ribbon Skirt Day, which is today. Bill S-219, An Act Respecting a National Ribbon Skirt Day became law on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and was introduced by **The Hon. Senator Mary Jane McCallum**, a citizen of **Barren Lands First Nation**.

Two years ago, **Isabella Kulak** of **Cote First Nation** in Saskatchewan was singled out by a staff member of her school for wearing her ribbon skirt. The Ribbon Skirt is traditionally worn for ceremony and publicly by our women as an expression of their identity and culture.

Isabella Kulak in her letter to Senator McCallum said: “The ribbon skirt represents strength, resiliency, cultural identity and womanhood. When I wear my ribbon skirt I feel confident and proud to be a young indigenous girl.”

She went on to say: “Today I no longer feel shamed and I feel proud and powerful enough to move mountains because I know that people from around the world are standing with me. I am very grateful to be Canadian, to be Indian and to represent my people by wearing my ribbon skirt proudly! Thank you to Senator McCallum and to all the people who supported me from around the world, from Canada and from all the First Nations across the nations of the earth.”

**Grand Chief Garrison Settee** states:

“On behalf of the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, I commend Isabella Kulak for her courage and honesty in standing up for her beliefs. I also wish to thank Senator McCallum for her legislative efforts in the creation of National Ribbon Skirt Day as it not only provides an opportunity for others to learn about our culture but is now law and Indigenous women no longer have to fight to wear their colors and skirts. We are encouraged by this and will continue to support our women in their expression of their culture and identity in both public and ceremonial settings in our country.”

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#### **For more information:**

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