



## Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

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For immediate release

June 22, 2022

### **MKO Expresses Continued Support and Sympathies for the Family and Friends of the Late Rebecca Contois**

***Treaty One Territory, Winnipeg, MB*** – Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Inc. is issuing this statement to express our continued support and sympathies with the family and friends of the late Rebecca Contois as the remains found at the Brady Road landfill by the Winnipeg police have been identified as belonging to the 24-year-old.

“On behalf of Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, today I share our continued support and prayers to the family and friends of Rebecca Contois,” said **Grand Chief Garrison Settee**. “I also thank the Winnipeg Police Services for carrying out the challenging and heavy-hearted task of searching the Brady Road landfill. I also commend the Winnipeg Police Services for honouring and respecting the family’s wishes to have this difficult task informed by a culturally and trauma informed approach. This is a big step towards building healthy and respectful relationships with Indigenous people and reconciliation.”

“Over the past few months, our community members have been tremendously impacted by the tragic losses of our Indigenous women,” stated **Heidi Spence**, Director of MKO’s Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Liaison Unit. “This recent search and recovery have opened emotions which can lead some to being re-triggered and vulnerable. We would like to remind anyone who is impacted by the issue of MMIWG and gender-based violence, the MKO Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Liaison Unit staff are available to provide support services.”

Anyone who needs support can call MKO’s MMIWG Liaison Unit toll free at 1-800-442-0488 or at 204-307-0485.

Anyone who needs access to emergency counselling or support can call either of the following crisis lines 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

- Klinik Crisis Line provides counselling and support. Call 1-888-322-3019.
- The Sexual Assault Crisis Line also provides counselling and support. Call 1-888-292-7565.

“We need to continue working together and protect our women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+”

people,” shared Grand Chief Settee. “The violence needs to stop, and we need to hold our women with more dignity and respect. This cycle of violence cannot continue, the young people who are being impacted are counting on all of us to make our communities safe again.”

Members of MKO’s MMIWG Liaison Unit are assisting with a candlelight vigil for Rebecca Contois this evening. The vigil takes place at 447 Pacific Avenue in Winnipeg from 6 to 8 pm on Wednesday, June 22. Bring your drums and prayers. Everyone is welcome.

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**For more information:**

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