



Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

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MKO Responds to Latest Ruling from the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal

Treaty Five Territory, Thompson, MB – Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) is issuing this statement in response to the latest ruling of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) regarding First Nations children impacted by the provincial child welfare system.

“The latest ruling by the CHRT is another positive step forward in bringing justice to all First Nations children and families who were subject to Canada’s discriminatory practices,” shared **Grand Chief Garrison Settee**. “Compensating the affected children and families fairly is an important step in moving towards reconciliation. MKO also supports the strong recommendation of the Tribunal that Canada compensate the estate and family of Jordan River Anderson (the late First Nation child from Norway House whose legacy inspired Jordan’s Principle) as a powerful symbol of reconciliation. As Grand Chief of MKO, I will continue to work with the Northern Chiefs to restore our inherent jurisdiction over child welfare matters.”

Chief Larson Anderson of the Norway House Cree Nation shared the following remarks on the latest ruling of the CHRT: “My Council, community, and I are very happy with the latest ruling by the CHRT because we have been aggressively advocating from the grassroots level for compensation for Jordan Anderson’s family since we were elected into office by our membership. Council and I have asserted ourselves with the federal government in regards to social justice for the late Jordan Anderson’s family.”

On May 28, the Tribunal made a decision that provides clarity on definitions of “essential service,” “service gap,” and “unreasonable delay” in relation to compensation ordered to First Nations children who were subjected to Canada’s discriminatory policies regarding Jordan’s Principle and First Nations child and family services.

The Tribunal upheld several issues related to definitions that the Assembly of First Nations and First Nations Child and Family Caring Society put forward, including that a service does not need to be “requested” to be considered “essential” and that the definitions must be grounded in substantive equality. The Tribunal also agreed that a “service gap” should be defined “with reference to a child’s confirmed needs during the period of Canada’s discrimination and such needs should be assessed based on the principles of a child’s best interests, substantive equality, overcoming historic disadvantages, and consideration of distinct circumstances.’

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Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) is a non-profit, political advocacy organization that has represented 26 First Nation communities in Manitoba's North since 1981. The MKO represents more than 72,000 First Nations people.