



Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

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Office of Grand Chief Garrison Settee

July 8, 2020

Honourable Ralph Eichler
Minister of Economic Development and Training
Province of Manitoba
344 Legislative Building
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Re: Request for moratorium of interest on loans under the Community Economic Development Fund (CEDF) Fisheries Loan Program

Dear Minister Eichler,

As the Grand Chief of the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Inc., I have been made aware of the concerns of fishers in the MKO region of their hardships that are not only financial in nature, but social as well, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The inland fisheries economy has suffered a tremendous impact from the pandemic with the markets shutting down in the past months. While the restrictions are slowly being lifted, the recovery of the fisheries economy will take much longer. Of note in the MKO region, our citizens who rely upon the fisheries as a way of life and income are suffering great financial hardship from the initial impact of the pandemic in the past months. It is expected they will continue to suffer while the fisheries economy slowly recovers.

While we, as the leadership of Northern Manitoba, can work with the CEDF on the scheduling of loan payments, the involvement and action of your government is required to address the issue of placing a moratorium on the *interest* on loans under the CEDF program. I am sure you will agree that the fisheries contribute significant resources and revenue to the economy of Manitoba. The people who maintain and drive the fisheries industry in Manitoba require assistance due to the unprecedented impact from the global COVID-19 pandemic.

I am requesting the Province of Manitoba place a moratorium on the *interest* accrued from the fisheries loans under the CEDF Fisheries Loans Program. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please have your staff contact my assistant Clyde Flett by phone at (204) 390-2702 or by email at clyde.flett@mkonorth.com.

Sincerely,

Grand Chief Garrison Settee
Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

cc. *MKO First Nations*
Grand Chief Arlen Dumas, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
Grand Chief Jerry Daniels, Southern Chiefs Organization
President David Chartrand, Manitoba Metis Federation
Honourable Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Canada
Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Indigenous Services, Canada