



## BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

605 – 100 Park Royal  
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4<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting  
 June 28, 2007 Okanagan Indian Band, Vernon, BC

Resolution 17/2007

**SUBJECT:** SUPPORT FOR THE VANCOUVER ISLAND ABORIGINAL  
 TRANSITION TEAM (VIATT)

**MOVED BY:** Chief Maureen Chapman, Skawahlook First Nation

**SECONDED BY:** Chief Bob Chamberlain, Kwicksutaineuk-ahkwaw-ah-mish Band

**DECISION:** Carried with Twelve Abstentions

**WHEREAS:** We recognize that our children and families are the cornerstone of our Nations future; and

**WHEREAS:** Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia possess an inherent right of self determination including jurisdiction relating to the children and families of those Nations; and

**WHEREAS:** First Nations are in the process of reclaiming the right of self determination and jurisdiction, which is currently not respected by the federal and provincial governments; and

**WHEREAS:** Control of the overall direction and culture, including policy, planning, practice setting and administrative oversight for all child and family services remains within the control of government; and

**WHEREAS:** The BCAFN on behalf of the First Nations, support the spirit and intent of the historic Tsawwassen Accord signed June 2002 that clearly advocates returning the control of our children's lives deep into the heart of community care; and

**WHEREAS:** The Tsawwassen Accord is supported by the Joint Aboriginal Management Committee and the First Nations Leadership Council (First Nations Summit, Union of BC Indian Chiefs, and the Assembly of First Nation); and

**WHEREAS:** The BCAFN is aware that currently there are three times the number of Aboriginal children in care in Canada than there were at the height of residential school operations; and

**WHEREAS:** The BCAFN is aware that the crisis in child welfare continues to mount, with the disastrous milestone in BC history recently being reached where Aboriginal children account for

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Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 28<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2007, Vernon, BC



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over 50% of the children in care of the government. And this number continues to rise; and

**WHEREAS:** Our Nations assert an inherent right with respect to and jurisdiction over the safety and well being of children and families; and

**WHEREAS:** The BCAFN is aware that the establishment of a Vancouver Island Aboriginal Authority is an unprecedented opportunity to reclaim control over the service system impacting our children, families and communities.

**WHEREAS:** Without prejudice, this resolution is specific to Vancouver Island Transition Team and is not meant to set a precedent or infringe on any other First Nations inherent rights.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the BCAFN Chiefs in Assembly direct the Regional Chief to work with the Vancouver Island Aboriginal Transition Team to devolve authority over their First Nation children and families from the Ministry of Children and Family Development to a Vancouver Island Regional Aboriginal Authority.

**FINALLY BE IT RESOLVED** that the BCAFN Chiefs in Assembly direct the Regional Chief to pursue a province wide assembly to discuss the development of a strategy to address First Nations jurisdictions over First Nations Children, Families and Communities.

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