

Tsawwassen Accord

Creating a Vision for the Future:

A Provincial Conference on Aboriginal Child and Family Services Governance

Re: Provincial Proposal for Regionalization of Aboriginal Child Welfare Services

- A. Whereas Aboriginal People as defined under Section 35 of the Constitution of Canada recognize that our children and families are the cornerstone of our Nations futures.*
- B. Whereas the Aboriginal Nations have an inherent right of self determination including jurisdiction relating to the children and families of those Nations;*
- C. Whereas the rights of self determination and jurisdiction are not respected by the federal and provincial governments;*
- D. Whereas the federal government is acting in a manner not consistent with its fiduciary obligations to our Nations to act in the best interests of our children and families;*
- E. Whereas the Province is proposing a process of regionalization for child welfare, which is in keeping with the trend toward institutionalization which, is a further derogation of our rights.*
- F. Whereas the regionalization proposal imposes an unrealistic timeline, includes a threat that failure to participate in this process within the timeframe allotted will preclude future involvement or participation; the lack of clarity around Aboriginal Governance structures as used in Hon. Hogg's correspondence of June 10 2002;*
- G. Whereas the Province has dictated the planning and design of the governance of Regional Authorities of Child and Family Services without adequate and appropriate consultation to ensure the needs of Aboriginal Nations are met, including the superimposition of a proposed blended Regional Authority;*
- H. Whereas the proposed blended authority model reinforces the province's assimilative policies.*

Therefore be it resolved

- A. That the Interior Region reject unequivocally the concept of a blended Aboriginal Regional Authority;*
- B. That the Interior Region accepts in principle the concept of an Aboriginal Regional Authority;*

Declaration

- Our children and our families are the cornerstone of our futures, and we recognize that Our Children are Our Future.*
- The provincial assertion of jurisdiction in the area of child and family services, and the delegated models, which the province is urging upon our communities, has resulted in a situation where our children are not being properly cared for.*
- Our inherent right of self-determination will only be achieved through the recognition of our inherent jurisdiction for our children and families, and has a strong and lasting commitment to ensuring that this right is recognized and fully implemented.*
- The federal government has the over arching fiduciary duty to protect and support our jurisdiction in this area, and must be pressured to take up these responsibilities by fully funding and supporting our assertion of jurisdiction in the area of child and family services.*
- The Interior Region is directed to plan ways for Aboriginal Nations, as a unified force, to work towards asserting our inherent jurisdiction in the area of child and family services.*

As endorsed on June 10 - 11 2002

Best Western Tsawwassen Inn

Delta BC