



Tsi Nahò:ten Karihwanákere Nó:nen'k

PRESS RELEASE

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Iroquois Caucus sends out invitations for Membership Citizenship Summit

For Immediate Release

(Kahnawake – 3, Onerahtókha/April) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke wishes to inform the community that the Iroquois Caucus is organizing a Summit on Membership and Citizenship on 18 and 19, Onerahtókha/April 2018 in Akwesásne. The Iroquois Caucus has invited the Traditional bodies to identify representatives to begin urgently-needed dialogue amongst leadership on how to respond to the imminent threat created by Canada's amendments to the *Indian Act* (S-3).

The amendments, which were sparked by last year's Descheneaux Decision, could see upwards of a million new persons being eligible for Indian registration and to be added to the federal list of 'Status Indians.'

"We have serious concerns over the potential impacts we will experience over this imposition of the Federal Government," stated Ietsenhaiensh Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer. "For example, based on a demographer's projection for Quebec communities, we believe we could have anywhere from 17,000 to 30,000 additional people eligible for Indian Status that could be tied to Kahnawà:ke alone, which will make the Federal list for Kahnawà:ke completely outnumber the actual 6,600 Members on our *Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke Registry*. These individuals may have little or no ties to our community with minimal Indigenous lineage, but Canada will recognize them as Indians with the same rights as us."

"The time is now for discussion between the Traditional Haudenosaunee and the elected leadership," said Grand Chief Joseph Tokwirot Norton. "We must find the common ground necessary to prevent us from being overrun by people who, in many cases, have never set foot on our territories. We have to gain clarity on the issues of Membership and, more importantly, Citizenship. This can only happen through dialogue between all of our Nation's leadership. This is Canada's latest attempt at assimilation. We must fight back as we always do."

"Canada has to cease being in the business of making and registering Indians with their loose criteria because only we as Nations should be able to determine our Members and Citizens" concluded Ietsenhaiensh Sky-Deer. "Our people could provide a powerful voice if we can speak as a united front on this important matter."

A formal agenda will be drafted for distribution. The Iroquois Caucus is asking for a limit of 6 representatives per Community. The MCK will send two (2) representatives and are hopeful the two traditional bodies in Kahnawà:ke will also represent the Community.

Please note that, due to the short time frame, this preliminary meeting will not be open to the general public, though this may change in future meetings.

The Iroquois Caucus, which is comprised of elected leaders from Akwesásne, Kahnawà:ke, Kaneshatá:ke, Oneida of the Thames, Six Nations of the Grand River, Tyendinaga and Wahta.

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