



Mi'kmaq
Confederacy of
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Dear Community Member,

As you are no doubt aware, there has been much talk recently about the Government of Canada's Bill C – 45. As your Chiefs we have deep concerns about this Bill for various reasons. The Federal government's inclusion of amendments to numerous pieces of legislation, including the Indian Act, in what is known as omnibus legislation limits the opportunity for engagement and disregards the Crown obligations for consulting with the First Nations and accommodating the First Nations.

The omnibus legislation contains amendments to legislation relating to the environment, Reserve lands, waterways and the fishery – these are core matters that go to the heart of Aboriginal and treaty rights. Yet despite the fact that the legislation will have impacts on constitutionally entrenched rights, the government has refused to listen to the First Nations' position and has demonstrated a lack of respect for the First Nations and their communities. The Federal government has rushed this legislation through Parliament without hearing the voice of the First Nations on matters that are fundamental to their established rights as Aboriginal people, and this is unacceptable.

To date there have been numerous protests and demonstrations right across the country, including here on Prince Edward Island. Through the Mi'kmaq Confederacy, we issued a press release and have taken part in radio and television interviews to raise awareness about this Bill and the potentially serious implications of it. There was also a rally held at Province House last Friday to protest against the actions of the Federal Government. We will not stop there!

This is a serious issue and we will be travelling to Ottawa on December 21st to join with First Nations across the country in demonstrating on Parliament Hill at the "Idle No More" rally. We are going to ensure that the voice of the First Nations will be heard by the Government of Canada and that we will not accept our Aboriginal and treaty rights being ignored. While in Ottawa, we will discuss what other steps can be taken to force the Federal Government to respect us as governments and to act honourably and live up to their constitutional obligations. We commit to keeping you informed as we move forward together.

Yours in Spirit,

Chief Brian Francis
Abegweit First Nation

Chief Darlene Bernard
Lennox Island First Nation

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