



For Immediate Release

March 6, 2015

The following is distributed by the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI

Statement by the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI regarding efforts to regulate online gaming

Charlottetown, PEI, March 6, 2015 ---

In 2009, the PEI First Nations, through MCPEI, entered into a partnership with the Provincial Government of PEI to explore the regulation of online gaming.

The object was to license and regulate gaming companies to ensure protection of the playing public. The revenues from licensing fees would have gone toward our chronically underfunded social programs.

This was an effort to regulate an unregulated industry.

While the Band Councils were aware and fully supportive of this initiative, confidentiality was required to maintain a competitive advantage in the marketplace. Once the opportunity was fully explored, Band Meetings would have been held prior to the project moving forward; however, the Province backed-out while still in the confidential stage.

MCPEI was very proud to be involved with this landmark venture. It had the potential to raise much needed revenue for the First Nations, as well as job creation, while protecting the public. It is unfortunate that it did not proceed.

It is disappointing when First Nations take an own-source, business-like approach to securing funding for its underfunded communities, and they are maligned in the media -

particularly when the economic development opportunity serves the double role of public protection.

It is regrettable that these well-intended efforts have now become fodder for Provincial political advantage.

It cannot be expressed strongly enough that Aboriginal and Treaty Rights would not have been impacted negatively in any way, shape or form.

MCPEI presents it's audit to the full membership of both First Nations every year. MCPEI holds an Annual Gathering where the audit is presented and reviewed and the floor is open for questions.

The loan from Innovation PEI is covered in our main audits in the years covered by the initiative 2008-2013. Monies received were in increments and flowed through to McInnes Cooper to cover off legal fees and professional service expenses incurred.

All expenses were applied directly to the initiative.

No funds were used for any normal MCPEI activities.

Comments from the NDP candidate regarding our governments, the MCPEI and staff are baseless, without merit and are defamatory. It is hoped that the Leader of the NDP does not support these defamatory statements.

These baseless accusations should be retracted immediately.

Signed,

Chief Matilda Ramjattan, Lennox Island First Nation
Chief Brian Francis, Abegweit First Nation

and

Don MacKenzie, Executive Director

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