



February 5, 2018

Dear Member of Parliament:

As National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), I am honoured to call on you to vote in support of Private Members Bill C-262, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* at second reading. This is an historic opportunity to stand in support of Canada acting on its international human rights obligations and ensuring there is a plan, a process and accountability in Canada to ensure respect of the human rights of Indigenous peoples.

The AFN has long been a supporter of a legislative framework like Bill C-262 to ensure action is taken with us as partners. We deeply respect the leadership of Romeo Saganash, the Member for Abitibi/Baie-James/Nunavik/Eeyou in developing this Bill and working so hard to secure support from across so many sectors of Canadian society. The AFN also greatly appreciates the announcements of support by the current government respecting Bill C-262. You should also note that the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination reviewed Canada's human rights performance, and in a report released in August 2017, recommended that Canada move on a legislative framework to support implementation of the UN Declaration.

First Nations are heartened by the growing spirit of non-partisanship around this Bill, the many statements of support from diverse sectors of Canadian society and the support of individual Canadians. A Nanos Research project for the AFN (September 2017) shows that Canadians support the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and support legislation to implement the UN Declaration: nearly 7 in 10 Canadians (68%) are aware of the UN Declaration; and of those who are aware of the UN Declaration, three quarters (76%) support its implementation through legislation (51% support, 21% somewhat support).

Now it is your turn to be a part of this act of reconciliation in a very powerful way. We look forward to working with you and all Parliamentarians in the months ahead. Please do not hesitate to call my office should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Perry Bellegarde
National Chief