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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

BCAFN REGIONAL CHIEF TERRY TEEGEE APPLAUDS NEW FEDERAL INVESTMENTS FOR FIRST NATIONS IN BUDGET 2018

(Lheidli T'enneh Territory, Prince George - February 28, 2018) The federal budget was announced yesterday and Canada committed more than a quarter of its new spending to Indigenous Peoples. Specifically, Canada committed \$4.7 billion over the next five years, with a significant allocation aimed at supporting Indigenous children and families, propelling First Nations toward self-government, and investments in housing and health. "While this is indeed a step in the right direction," BCAFN Regional Chief Teegee stated, "I remain cautious that the federal election occurs next year, and that this poses a risk to the full implementation of these promises."

Regional Chief Teegee continued, "I applaud Minister Morneau and the Trudeau government's commitment to improving Canada's relationship with Indigenous Peoples based on the recognition of Indigenous rights; however, it is imperative that these promises are followed through. Canada must do better, and First Nations are acutely aware of the many unfulfilled promises to date. I stand with National Chief Perry Bellegarde's applause of the multi-million-dollar commitments to child welfare, housing, health services and skills development, and I am pleased to see Canada finally honour their commitments in this regard."

The budget also saw commitment to Indigenous health care funding, particularly in remote communities but was noticeably absent of details and funding for housing and committed to spend more than \$100 million over five years to develop a new legal framework for reconciliation based on recognizing rights and reconstituting nations.

The federal budget also provided new dollars to allow First Nations to move beyond the *Indian Act* while continuing investments aimed at closing spending gaps in areas long seen as irritants in the relationship between Canada and Indigenous peoples. BCAFN is resolute in that all future decisions, financial, policy, or otherwise, are made in accordance with the UN Declaration and the TRC Calls to Action.

The BCAFN will continue to provide advocacy support to First Nations in BC to ensure these commitments are reaching First Nations governments, organizations and citizens.

For further information contact:

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