



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**April 18, 2018**

### **BCAFN Presentation to the House of Commons Standing Committee regarding Bill C-69**

**(Lheidli T'enneh Territory, Prince George, BC – April 18, 2018)** – Yesterday, Regional Chief Terry Teegee of the BCAFN presented to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development regarding Bill C-69, *An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*. First Nations from across BC and Canada have been providing input into these new amendments to ensure First Nations perspectives and rights are considered by the Trudeau government.

Regional Chief Teegee stated, “First Nations government in BC have been dealing with many major project reviews for over 10 years now. From Enbridge’s Northern Gateway Project, over four large natural gas pipeline and terminal projects, the Kinder Morgan Transmountain Pipeline and several mines, among other projects. First Nations have the experience and knowledge to improve how companies can secure certainty to do business in their territories.”

As part of his presentation, Regional Chief Teegee noted that the following elements are missing from Bill C-69:

- 1) Bill C-69 does not yet support the full implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the principle of free, prior and informed consent – this is a common interest to First Nations, and Prime Minister Trudeau’s government has made commitments to its full implementation;
- 2) Bill C-69 should also fully recognize First Nations jurisdiction and decision-making authority;
- 3) Bill C-69 needs provisions to implementation tools to support indigenous led reviews – as full partners with Canada, there is no reason why indigenous governments and Crown governments can’t agree on a process that creates certainty for investors and First Nations;
- 4) Bill C-69 must have a more robust integration and respect for indigenous knowledge alongside Western science – in many cases the use and respect for indigenous knowledge and western science makes for a more robust understanding of impacts and mitigation, including avoidance;
- 5) Bill C-69 also does not go far enough to provide First Nations with necessary resources to participate and provide their free, prior and informed consent;

The BCAFN will continue to monitor progress on the development of Bill C-69, to ensure First Nations voices are heard and included into this and other federal amendments to various laws.

**For further information, contact:**

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