



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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BCAFN SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Merritt, BC
March 7 & 8, 2019

Resolution 7(e)/2019

SUBJECT: FAIR AND EQUITABLE ACCESS FOR FIRST NATIONS TO CREDIT RATING SYSTEM

MOVED BY:

SECONDED BY:

DECISION:

WHEREAS:

- A. First Nations individuals residing on reserve, employees of Bands and Band owned businesses, along with Bands as a collective entity, have been held separate and excluded from full enjoyment and benefit of the credit rating system as a critical component of the national and international economy;
- B. this exclusion continues to impact the economic advancement of this class of individuals by restricting their access to meaningful employment, impacts their health and security by limiting access to all form of insurance of person or property, limits their mobility and freedom by limiting access to safe and secure housing and limits the access to the economy of Band Councils and businesses located on reserve;
- C. this exclusion is considered a form of economic discrimination and increases the vulnerability of on-reserve individuals, government and business entities to predatory and discriminatory lending and financial practices;
- D. it is recognized that credit bureaus, banks and other related entities involved in the collection, consolidation, analysis and dissemination of credit information do not recognize a social responsibility to work toward the inclusion of critical First Nation consumer and commercial credit data;

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 8th day of March, 2019, at NVIT, Merritt, BC

A blue ink signature of Terry Teegee, the BC Regional Chief.

Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief

- E. this discrimination also impacts First Nations and other Indigenous peoples on all reserves across Canada and in in the northern territories on First Nation and Inuit settlement lands;
- F. the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which the Government of Canada has adopted without qualification and has, alongside the Province of British Columbia, committed to implement, affirms:
- Article 15 (2):** States shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among indigenous peoples and all other segments of society.
- Article 21 (1):** Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.
- Article 39:** Indigenous peoples have the right to have access to financial and technical assistance from States and through international cooperation, for the enjoyment of the rights contained in this Declaration.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. that the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly recognize the economic and social disadvantage caused by this discriminatory exclusion and are committed to working to increase the access of individuals, corporations and First Nation governments to the credit rating system in a manner that is fair, equitable, transparent and economically recognized;
2. that the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call upon the Province of British Columbia and the Government of Canada to work together to ensure equal and fair access of First Nations to the credit rating system and that any such effort be conducted in collaboration with First Nations and that any actions be co-developed as equal partners;
3. that the BCAFN Chief-in-Assembly direct the Regional Chief to send a letter requesting that the Solicitor General of the Province of British Columbia act to end these discriminatory practices of the Credit Bureaus and Financial Institutions; and
4. that the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call upon the Province of British Columbia and the Government of Canada to require credit bureaus, with legislation if necessary, to collect, on an opt in basis, credit-building transactions for individuals living on reserve (including but not limited to on time housing payments and utility bills) and transactions for First Nation Governments (CMHC loans) to improve credit ratings.

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Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief