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Lac La Ronge Indian Band

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

LLRIB pushes back as Ottawa signals broader consultation on Indian Act cutoff

(Treaty 6 Territory, Woodland Cree) Lac La Ronge Indian Band, Sask. – The Lac La Ronge Indian Band (LLRIB) is pressing Ottawa to immediately adopt a one-parent rule, warning broader consultation on registration reform must not delay ending what the Nation calls ongoing discrimination against First Nations families.

"Our people are our people. No law should tell us otherwise," said Chief Tammy Cook-Searson. "The one-parent rule is a practical and immediate step Canada can take now while broader reform continues."

The call comes after the Office of Indigenous Services Minister Mandy Gull-Masty confirmed Ottawa is considering options beyond the single-parent rule amendment proposed in Bill S-2, with further consultation planned this summer before legislation moves forward.

LLRIB said consultation with First Nations is important, but it cannot become another mechanism for delay.

The second-generation cutoff, created through 1985 amendments to the Indian Act, limits the ability of some First Nations people to pass status to their children after two successive generations of parenting with non-status individuals. LLRIB said the policy continues a colonial pattern of reducing the number of status Indians over time, with real impacts on families, identity, citizenship and access to services.

Within LLRIB, families have been divided under federal registration rules, with siblings and cousins treated differently. Many members now face the possibility that their children and grandchildren will lose status entirely.

"This rule has divided families and denied children their identity," said Chief Cook-Searson. "It tells some of our children they belong, and others that they do not. That is deeply harmful, and it interferes with our inherent responsibility to determine who belongs to our Nation."

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Earlier this year, LLRIB held engagement sessions with Elders, members and leadership across its communities. The Nation said members strongly supported a one-parent rule, which would allow a child to be registered if one parent is entitled to status.

Members told leadership that identity and belonging are rooted in ancestry, family, history and responsibility to future generations — not federal paperwork.

The Office of Minister Mandy Gull-Masty said Bill S-2 would immediately restore status to 3,500 people and responds to the Nicholas case, which challenged the Indian Act's enfranchisement provisions. The minister's office said Ottawa has accelerated its collaborative process with Indigenous organizations to address the second-generation cutoff, with broader consultation planned this summer.

LLRIB said those steps do not remove Canada's responsibility to act now on known discrimination.

The Nation also said the current registration system has masked the true size of First Nations populations, contributing to long-standing underfunding in housing, education, health care and other essential services. Legislative reform must be backed by funding that reflects actual population size.

"We will always assert our inherent right to determine our own membership," said Chief Cook-Searson. "But while Canada continues to control registration under its laws, it has a responsibility to ensure those laws are fair. Ending known discrimination cannot wait."

– 30 –

About Lac La Ronge Indian Band

Lac La Ronge Indian Band is one of Saskatchewan's largest First Nations, representing approx. 12,000 members across six northern communities. Rooted in Woodland Cree culture and Treaty rights, LLRIB advances self-determination, well-being and community leadership.

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