
Assembly of First Nations

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SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
DECEMBER 3 – 5, 2019, OTTAWA, ON

Resolution no. 89/2019

TITLE: Continuing First Nations Income Assistance Program Reform

SUBJECT: Social

MOVED BY: Chief David Monias, Pimicikamak, MB

SECONDED BY: Chief Franklin Paibomsai (Shining Turtle), Whitefish River First Nation, ON

DECISION Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

- A. *The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration) states:
- i. 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
 - ii. Article 23: Indigenous Peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, Indigenous Peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions.
- B. The First Nations Income Assistance Program (IA Program) is a fundamental social service provided to on-reserve First Nations individuals across the country.
- C. There are longstanding gaps in data collected and published under the IA Program, as well as in services delivered through the IA Program. An example of such gaps includes the provision of the Case Management Services and Pre-Employment Supports, which fall under the IA Program and aim to improve client transitions to education and employment. Budget 2019 only enables 29% of First Nations outside of Ontario to access Case Management Services and Pre-Employment Supports.

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- D. Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) has completed engagement on making the IA Program more responsive to on-reserve needs but has not allocated funding in Budget 2019 to implement recommendations from this engagement or continue their work on IA Program reform.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chiefs-in-Assembly:

1. Direct the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to pursue funding to conduct a study on identifying data and service gaps under the Income Assistance Program (IA Program).
2. Direct the AFN to urge the federal government to financially invest in the reform of the IA Program, as well as funding for expanding Case Management and Pre-Employment Supports to all First Nations.

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PERRY BELLEGARDE, NATIONAL CHIEF