
Assembly of First Nations

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Assemblée des Premières Nations

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**ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JULY 11, 12, & 13, 2023; HALIFAX, NS**

Resolution no. 46/2023

TITLE: Support for Increases to Tribal Council Funding

SUBJECT: Fiscal Relations, Governance

MOVED BY: Chief Byron Louis, Okanagan Indian Band, BC

SECONDED BY: Judy Wilson, proxy, Osoyoos Indian Band, BC

DECISION Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

- A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) states:
- i. Article 4: Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions.
 - ii. Article 23: 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. Tribal councils are organizations established by First Nations with common interests who voluntarily join together to provide capacity development and/or program services to member First Nations.
- C. The services delivered by Tribal Councils to their member communities are essential.
- D. Under the Indian Government Support Programs, delivered by Indigenous Services Canada, tribal council funding has not seen any significant increases in funding. The funding for the Tribal Council program was frozen in 1996, and further reduced by \$17 million in 2014.

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- E. Inflation has eroded the purchasing power of the Tribal Councils and their ability to deliver the same level of services.
- F. Canada has seen an increase in inflation of 70% from 1996 to 2023. This means that today's prices are 1.70 times as high as average prices since 1996, according to Statistics Canada's Consumer Price Index.
- G. As a result, an increase to the funding provided under the Tribal Council program is necessary.
- H. Tribal council funding should be sufficient, sustainable and predictable, providing needs-based funding to include the cost of staff retention and training, office space, and needed capacity supports in communities.
- I. The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) continues to identify needed resources for supports for Tribal Council funding and other programs related to governance through its annual submission to the Standing Committee on Finance for inclusion in federal budgets. In 2022, the AFN included an ask of \$3.5 billion dollars over five years to address the gaps in funding for existing governance programs.
- J. The 2019 Interim Report of the Joint Advisory Committee on Fiscal Relations (JACFR), *Honouring our Ancestors by Trailblazing a Path to the Future*, states:
 - i. "Moving forward, co-development of a new fiscal relationship would feature enhanced engagement that involves First Nations more deeply and provides appropriate recognition of regional differences and enhanced collaboration with both individual First Nations governments and Treaty organizations as rights holders, as well as tribal councils and regional organizations, to direction needed to address the full range of issues pertinent to the continued co-development of a new fiscal relationship."
- K. The Report also provided 24 recommendations in their 2019 Report, including a recommendation to:
 - i. Finalize new funding arrangement policies to strengthen the commitment to flexible and predictable funding, the reduction of reporting burdens and a shift from program to outcome-based reporting, and the elimination of General Assessment Scoring of First Nation communities in favour of First Nations-led tools.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the First Nations-in-Assembly:

1. Call on the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to provide political support for First Nations in securing increases in funding for the existing Tribal Council program through renewed funding agreements that include indexation, are needs-based, sufficient, predictable, and sustainable.
2. Call on Canada to ensure that Tribal Council program funding be increased to address chronic underfunding since 1996.

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3. Mandate the Assembly of First Nations to immediately bring forward this resolution to the Government of Canada and to keep the First Nations and Tribal Councils apprised of the status of discussions.

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