
TITLE: Support to Delay Cannabis Legalization

SUBJECT: Health, Social, Economic, Justice

MOVED BY: Chief Elaine Johnston, Serpent River First Nation, ON

SECONDED BY: Chief Scott McLeod, Nipissing First Nation, ON

DECISION: Carried; 3 objections

WHEREAS:

- A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (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 area of education, employment vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.
- B. Call to Action #18 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada calls upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Indigenous governments to acknowledge that the current state of unfavourable Indigenous health in Canada is a direct result of previous Canadian government policies, including Indian Residential Schools, and to recognize and implement the health-care rights of Indigenous people as identified in International law and constitutional law, and under the Treaties.
- C. The Government of Canada will be legalizing Cannabis via bills C-45 and C-46 in July 2018.
- D. The Government of Canada implemented the Marijuana for Medical Purposes Regulations and more recently the Access to Cannabis for Medical Purposes Regulations for the purpose of ensuring access to quality-controlled cannabis products by individuals with medical needs.
- E. The Quebec government and other provinces have tabled legislation on cannabis legalization which are expected to enter force by July 2018.
- F. Cannabis legalization in Canada will have social, child welfare, health, policing, legal and economic impacts on First Nation communities.

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- G.** As self-determining Indigenous nations, which are a cornerstone of the UN Declaration, First Nation people across Canada require the appropriate time and capacity to determine a response and action plan to the legalization of cannabis.
- H.** First Nation leadership presently do not feel fully equipped or informed about the proposed legislation in order to be responsive in a manner that is in alignment with our community values.

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

- 1.** Direct the National Chief and the Assembly of First Nations to advocate on behalf of the Chiefs in Assembly to delay federal legislation enabling cannabis legalization to allow time for First Nations to develop community-level public health and jurisdictional responses.
- 2.** Require a commitment from Canada, provinces and territories, to delay the entry into force of the cannabis legislation by one year to enable First Nations governments to:
 - a.** Adequately consult their communities in order to fully understand the impacts of the legislation on their members, as well as, the specific needs and priorities of First Nations with respect to cannabis legalization.
 - b.** Develop and adopt community specific drug policies that complement by-law and legislation focusing on wellness promotion.
 - c.** Identify and develop culturally adequate strategies and tools necessary to address the impacts of cannabis legalization on First Nation communities such as for example, in the area of youth education, prevention, addiction treatment, public safety, monitoring of impacts, etc., in accordance with First Nation priorities and actual needs.
- 3.** Call on Canada to provide equitable funding to support community efforts to identify and adequately address the needs of First Nations as a result of cannabis legalization, as outlined above.

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