



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ASSEMBLY OF
FIRST NATIONS

507-100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC
V7T 1A2

Ph: 604-922-7733
Fx: 604-922-7433



FIRST
NATIONS
SUMMIT

1200-100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC
V7T 1A2

Ph: 604-926-9903
Fx: 604-926-9923
Toll Free: 866-990-9939



UNION OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA
INDIAN CHIEFS

500-342 Water Street
Vancouver, BC
V6B 1B6

Ph: 604-684-0231
Fx: 604-684-5726

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 26, 2010

First Nations Leadership releases Joint Statement from Participating Nations regarding the proposed BC CLEAN ENERGY ACT

Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver – First Nations from throughout British Columbia gathered last week in Coast Salish territory to discuss a variety of matters related to closer collaboration. One of the time sensitive topics of discussion was the proposed BC Clean Energy Act that has passed first reading in the BC Legislature. This proposed act was constructed without First Nations involvement and there was no consultation prior to the introduction of the bill.

The attached Joint Statement on the proposed Clean Energy Act calls for the bill to be delayed until consultation and accommodation of First Nations title and rights occurs. 47 First Nations have already signed this joint statement and many more are anticipated to show support in the coming days.

Contacts:

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip (president@ubcic.bc.ca)
President, Union of BC Indian Chiefs
250-490-5314

Nicole Hetu (nicole.hetu@bcafn.ca)
Advisor, BC Assembly of First Nations
604-922-7733

Colin Braker (cbraker@fns.bc.ca)
Communications Director, First Nations Summit
604-926-9903



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V6B 1B6

Ph: 604-684-0231
Fx: 604-684-5726

May 21, 2010

Honourable Blair Lekstrom
Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources
PO Box 9060 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2
VIA FAX: (250) 356-2965

Honourable George Abbott
Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
PO Box 9060 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2
VIA FAX: (250) 953-4856

Dear Honourable Ministers,

First Nations leaders have significant concerns regarding the BC Clean Energy Act, and earlier this week issued the attached joint statement on the proposed legislation.

We understand that there is a confirmed meeting with some of the coastal Chiefs that have echoed these concerns. We fully support this request and encourage that the meeting be held prior to the Committee Stage to allow for amendments to occur prior to the passage of the bill.

Sincerely,

On behalf of the FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT:

Grand Chief Edward John

Dan Smith

Grand Chief Doug Kelly

On behalf of the UNION OF BC INDIAN CHIEFS

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip

Chief William Charlie

Chief Robert Chamberlin

On behalf of the BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS:

Regional Chief Jody Wilson-Raybould

cc. Dave Porter, BC First Nations Energy and Mining Council
Hon. Gordon Campbell, Premier of British Columbia

Joint Statement from Participating Nations Regarding the BC CLEAN ENERGY ACT

May 19, 2010

WHEREAS Aboriginal Title and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights continue to exist in British Columbia;

WHEREAS the First Nations of British Columbia never surrendered jurisdiction over our lands and resources;

WHEREAS the 2005 New Relationship statement agrees to establish processes and institutions for shared decision-making about the land and resources and for revenue and benefit sharing. It agrees to a new government-to-government relationship based on respect, recognition and accommodation of aboriginal title and rights;

WHEREAS the BC government has recently held first reading of the Clean Energy Act. This Act represents the future direction for green energy production and exports. This act was constructed without First Nations involvement and there was no consultation prior to the introduction of the Act. We are told the Act was guided by a Green Energy Task Force however upon review of the legislation it is clear that the majority of the First Nations recommendations were ignored;

WHEREAS the Clean Energy Act exempts significant major hydro and transmission projects from oversight by the BC Utilities Commission; and

WHEREAS the provincial Crown has unilaterally implemented these sweeping changes ignoring the court-recognized legal obligations for meaningful consultation and accommodation in the development of the Clean Energy Act.

We, the assembled Nations from across British Columbia speak with one voice to say:

- 1. We call upon the BC government to amend the proposed Act and incorporate all recommendations that support First Nations involvement in clean energy opportunities.**
- 2. We call upon the Premier and Cabinet to immediately engage in a discussion with First Nations leaders to work out a solution to incorporate our recommendations.**
- 3. We call upon the BC government to delay the bill until adequate consultation and accommodation with First Nations occurs.**

Signed at Chief Joe Mathias Centre, Coast Salish Territory.