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## ***News Release***

### **BC First Nations Leadership Council Welcomes Private Members Bill to Implement Kelowna Accord**

***For Immediate Release:***

***May 19, 2006***

Coast Salish Traditional Territory/Vancouver, BC – The BC First Nations Leadership Council applauds the introduction of a Private Member’s bill to implement the historic *Kelowna Accord*. The enactment of Bill C-292 requires that the Government of Canada fulfill its obligations and commitments reached under the *Kelowna Accord* and recognizes that the *Accord* was the result of a collaborative process among the Government of Canada, provincial and territorial governments, and Aboriginal leadership across Canada.

The First Nations Leadership Council urges all Members of Parliament to embark on a non-partisan approach to Aboriginal issues, as demonstrated by the BC legislature, in supporting the proposed bill. The Bill supports previous calls made by the First Nations Leadership Council, Premier Gordon Campbell, and the BC Government for the federal government to uphold the financial commitments set out in the *Kelowna Accord* in order to address critical socio-economic gaps. This includes a dedicated ten-year plan to improve the quality of life for Aboriginal peoples. The Act, cited as the *Kelowna Accord Implementation Act*, enacts that the Government of Canada take all measures necessary to implement the terms of the *Kelowna Accord*.

The First Nations Leadership Council reiterates their demand for the federal government to amend the 2006 federal budget to include the financial resources required to close the gaps in health, education, housing and economic opportunity as set forth in the *Accord*. This Bill provides an opportunity for the Crown to restore its honour and to acknowledge that a “new approach” for addressing Aboriginal issues was demonstrated in the jointly developed *Kelowna Accord* and notable tri-partite agreement, the *Transformative Change Accord*.

The First Nations Leadership Council strongly recommends that the federal government cooperates with the Leadership Council and the Province of British Columbia in providing timely investments to ensure that the mutually agreed upon goals of the *Transformative Change Accord* are achieved. The *Kelowna Accord* and the *Transformative Change Accord* are the result of a collaborative process between all parties leaving the Government of Canada accountable to more than just themselves.

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The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the First Nations Summit, Union of BC Indian Chiefs and the BC Assembly of First Nations. The Council works

together to politically represent the interests of First Nations in British Columbia and develop strategies and actions to bring about significant and substantive changes to government policy that will benefit all First Nations in British Columbia.

For more information:

Chief Stewart Phillip, Union of BC Indian Chiefs (250) 490-5314

Colin Braker, First Nations Summit (604) 926-9903

Heather Gillies, BC Assembly of First Nations (604) 922-7733