

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

News Release

May 15, 2025

Kill the Bill: First Nations Call on B.C. Government to Immediately Withdraw Bill 14 and Bill 15

(xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) This morning the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) held an emergency meeting with First Nations leaders to discuss the potential impacts of Bill 14 and Bill 15 on title and rights and articulate their concerns to Premier Eby, who attended for a portion of the meeting. The Chiefs and leaders in attendance stood united in rejecting the Bills and asked Premier Eby to immediately withdraw Bill 14 and 15. They were deeply disappointed with Premier Eby's response that he plans to continue advancing the Bills despite their clear opposition.

Bill 14 *Renewable Energy Projects (Streamlined Permitting) Act* and Bill 15 *Infrastructure Projects Act* are currently at Committee stage with only five days left in the legislative calendar. House leader Mike Farnworth passed a motion on time allocation meaning that a final vote will be held by 8pm on May 28. First Nations, the Union of B.C. Municipalities, environmental organizations, as well as the B.C. Green Party and the B.C. Conservatives have all spoken out against the Bills, both for their hasty and unilateral development, and concerned with the sweeping powers the Bills would provide the government.

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, UBCIC President, stated "Unilateralism is not acceptable. Throughout our history we have been advocating that laws, policies and practices need to reflect and respect First Nations' title, rights and jurisdiction. The Declaration Act was a turning point in our fight, and the Province must follow its own law. Instead, the Province is now stepping back and has admitted that they've violated their own policies and processes that guide implementation of the Declaration Act in developing the Bills. The Province is saying 'trust us' and that they won't misuse the unfettered power these Bills provide; however, considering the Bills were created without consultation and cooperation and that the Province continues to refuse any amendments, it is unclear what this trust would be based on. If the Province wants to fast-track projects, these Bills are not going to do that, they are setting the stage for bigger fights."

B.C. Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief Terry Teegee stated, "I strongly condemn the BC government's unilateral and regressive approach to Bills 14 and 15 development. Premier David Eby has insisted on hastily making them law, refusing to work with First Nations to amend them and disregarding the necessity of obtaining consent prior to their passing. I cannot overstate the serious setback and harm these actions have on the years of work, the integrity of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA), and the future of reconciliation. We advocate for principled actions that respect First Nations' rights and contend that the current measures jeopardize our progress. We urge Premier David Eby to uphold the commitments made under DRIPA in 2019 and to ensure that our rights, jurisdictions, and priorities are defended. Nothing short of repeal would be acceptable or serious amendments need to be made!"

"It is outrageous that Bills 14 and 15 were developed with no meaningful consultation with First Nations, given the tremendous amount of time and effort we have collectively put into establishing a principled framework for reconciliation in BC – one that respects First Nations' title, rights and jurisdictions and enables Crown obligations to be met," said Cheryl Casimer, Nasu?kin (Chief) of ?aqam. "Instead of



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utilizing this framework, the provincial government has abandoned it, in both principle and process. The implications of this suite of Bills are profoundly far reaching. If they advance, they pose a serious risk to First Nation and lands, waters, resources and territories that we have an inherent and sacred responsibility to steward. In short, they pose a direct threat to our sovereignty. We are deeply alarmed by the Province's continued backsliding on reconciliation."

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The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), First Nations Summit (FNS), and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC). <https://www.fnlc.ca/>

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