



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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Statement

December 3, 2020

BCAFN Congratulates First Peoples' Cultural Council on their 30th Anniversary

The BC Assembly of First Nations' Regional Chief Terry Teegee and Board of Directors are pleased to join the celebrations for the 30th anniversary of the First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) and their extensive work to revitalize Indigenous languages, arts and culture in British Columbia. Many language advocates have been sounding the alarm about the disappearance of Indigenous languages, and we hold up our hands in gratitude to them and the FPCC for their tireless commitment to help revitalize our cultural heritage and way of life. First Nations cultures, languages and identity are integral pillars of the wellness of First Nations communities and their members, and there is an urgency to the efforts to preserve, revitalize and promote them.

For three decades FPCC has provided support and resources for 204 B.C. First Nation communities, 34 languages, and over 90 dialects. Language champions, language learners, knowledge holders, artists, arts administrators, schools, and arts and culture organizations have been able to find funding for training, mentor-ship and innovative programming and publications.

The FPCC also provided critical expertise and engagement support in the development of the federal *Indigenous Languages Act*, which received royal assent in June 2019. This *Act* is a critical step forward, which will bolster support for the revitalization of Indigenous languages.

FPCC has also served a key role in terms of knowledge generation, sharing, and preservation, having embraced technologies and online programs such as First Voices, a platform for Indigenous languages which was launched in 2003. FPCC also monitors the status of B.C. First Nations languages, cultures and arts and regularly publishes a report providing up-to-date and accurate data regarding the status of Indigenous languages in B.C. In 2019 the FPCC marked the International Year of Indigenous Languages by co-hosting the international conference, HELISET TFE SKÁL (pronounced ha-LEE-sut-te-skwayl) – 'Let the Languages Live' – 2019 International Conference on Indigenous Languages, which was attended by champions from BC and across the world.

We look forward to the work of the FPCC, as they continue to support First Nations in revitalizing and reclaiming our languages.

#honouringourancestors

