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**TITLE:** Declaration of November as Indigenous Disability Awareness Month

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**SUBJECT:** Health, Disability

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**MOVED BY:** Grand Chief Edward John, Proxy, Tl'azt'en Nation, BC

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**SECONDED BY:** Cheryl Casimer, Proxy, Tobacco Plains Indian Band, BC

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**DECISION** Carried by Consensus

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**WHEREAS:**

A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states:

- i. Article 21 (2): States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities.

B. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Preamble states:

- i. (C): The universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and the need for persons with disabilities to be guaranteed their full enjoyment without discrimination.
- ii. (H): That discrimination against any person on the basis of disability is a violation of the inherent dignity and worth of the human person.
- iii. (M): The valued existing and potential contributions made by persons with disabilities to the overall well-being and diversity of their communities, and that the promotion of the full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of their human rights and fundamental freedoms and of full participation by persons with disabilities will result in their enhanced sense of belonging and in significant advances in the human, social and economic development of society and the eradication of poverty.

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- iv. (P): Concerned about the difficult conditions faced by persons with disabilities who are subject to multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, indigenous or social origin, property, birth, age or other status.
- C. Indigenous persons and families living with a disability within Canada represent a marginalized population within an already marginalized population. Disability rates among Indigenous people is over twice that of the national rate and that at every age, Indigenous Canadians are more likely to have disabilities than Canadians who are not Indigenous.
- D. The British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society (BCANDS) is a not-for-profit, Indigenous organization, supported by Assembly of First Nations Resolution.85/2004 that promotes and supports the full inclusion of all Indigenous individuals and families living with disabilities in Canada through its delivery of comprehensive, person centered, disability and health related services.
- E. Through BCANDS service delivery and collaboration with Indigenous, federal and provincial governments and leadership, BCANDS assists to eliminate barriers, raise awareness and create opportunities for improved and responsive services, and the increased inclusion of Indigenous individuals and families living with a disability within Canada.
- F. The annual recognition and proclamation of November as Indigenous Disability Awareness Month will assist in raising awareness around the need to eliminate barriers facing the Indigenous population of Canada living with a disability and aid in the creation of new and expanded partnerships.

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

1. Recognize and declare the month of November as “Indigenous Disability Awareness Month” with the overall goals of promoting and enhancing awareness of Indigenous disability issues and building more inclusive communities through recognition of the substantial and valuable contributions of Indigenous peoples living with disabilities within Canada.
2. Support British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society (BCANDS) and its efforts for national endorsement / recognition and declaration of the month of November, in each calendar year, as “Indigenous Disability Awareness Month” through “Proclamations / Resolutions” from Indigenous, federal and provincial governments and leadership across Canada, and other regional Indigenous disability entities working on these critical issues.

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