
TITLE: Support for the Registered Disability Savings Plan

SUBJECT: Health, Disability

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

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

DECISION Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

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

- 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. (T): The fact that the majority of persons with disabilities live in conditions of poverty, and in this regard recognizing the critical need to address the negative impact of poverty on persons with disabilities.
- ii. (V): The importance of accessibility to the physical, social, economic and cultural environment, to health and education and to information and communication, in enabling persons with disabilities to fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- iii. (X): That the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State, and those persons with disabilities and their family members should receive the necessary protection and assistance to enable families to contribute towards the full and equal enjoyment of the rights of persons with disabilities.

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- 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 are over twice that of the national rate, and at every age, Indigenous Canadians are more likely to have disabilities than Canadians who are not Indigenous.
- D. The Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) was designed for individuals under the age of 60 who are eligible for the disability tax credit. The RDSP was created by the Government of Canada to help people with disabilities and their families save for their long-term financial security.
- E. 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.
- F. BCANDS is a member of the Government of British Columbia's RDSP Action Group, an advisory committee to government whose membership includes prominent financial and social leaders working to realize the government's commitment to build and maintain British Columbia's position as the province with the highest per capita uptake of RDSPs in Canada.
- G. The Assembly of First Nations recognizes the importance of the economic and social inclusion of all persons and families living with a disability, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, and the past and current work of the BCANDS within the Indigenous disability and health sectors of Canada and its mission of: "Supporting the unique and comprehensive disability, health and resource needs of Indigenous persons and organizations through relevant, timely and accessible services," and wishes to continue to support their work.

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

1. Promote and support the work of the British Columbia Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) Action Group, and other regional Indigenous disability entities working on these critical issues, to address current gaps within this program and facilitate education/awareness opportunities for First Nations persons with disabilities; and ensure effective collaboration and implementation between Indigenous, federal, provincial and municipal governments, disability related organizations, communities, policy makers and other relevant stakeholders to assist in maximizing RDSP enrollment within the Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities of British Columbia and Canada.
2. Support the British Columbia RDSP Action Group's work to promote and enhance enrollment in RDSP by eligible First Nations individuals and families living with a disability within both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

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