



The Corporation of the District of Saanich | Mayor's Office
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November 24, 2020

VIA EMAIL: Marc.Miller@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Marc Miller
Minister of Indigenous Services
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Miller:

Re: Support for Recognizing September 30 as National Day of Truth and Reconciliation

On November 23, 2020, Saanich Council considered a Report to Council from Mayor Haynes dated November 6, 2020 and resolved:

1. *"That Council endorse the letter of support addressed to the Federal Minister of Indigenous Services, copying the British Columbia Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, to encourage making September 30 a statutory holiday marking a national day of remembrance of residential school Survivors of Canada; and*
2. *That Council provide the report to other local governments within British Columbia."*

On behalf of Saanich Council, I write to you to encourage royal assent of Bill C-5 for recognition of September 30 as a statutory national holiday for Truth and Reconciliation. This national holiday would acknowledge residential school survivors and recognize the harms that 150,000 children experienced in 139 residential schools across Canada. The last residential school in our country did not close its doors until 1996.

In the words of residential school survivor, Eddy Charlie, "This Bill will help increase the rights of Canada's Indigenous peoples, including rights to self, determination, lands and languages, and by having this Bill passed it will create an opportunity for all Canadians to celebrate equality."

We encourage the federal government to pass Bill C-5 to show that our nation is serious about recognizing the harms experienced by Indigenous peoples of Canada. The Bill emphasizes the rights of Indigenous peoples to maintain and strengthen their own institutions, cultures, and traditions, and to pursue their development in keeping with their own needs and aspirations.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and hope that you will support Saanich Council's resolution. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Sincerely,

Fred Haynes
Mayor

Atta.

c. Saanich Council
BC Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
Cristina Caravaca, Senior Manager of Community Services, Parks, & Recreation
Eddy Charlie



The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Report

To: Mayor and Council
From: Fred Haynes, Mayor
Date: November 6, 2020
Subject: Recommendation of Support – September 30 as National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorse the attached draft letter of support addressed to the Federal Minister of Indigenous Services, copying the British Columbia Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, to encourage making September 30 a statutory holiday marking a national day of remembrance of residential school Survivors of Canada; and
2. share this report with other local governments within British Columbia.

BACKGROUND

On September 28, 2020, Saanich Council presented a proclamation to residential school Survivor Eddy Charlie and Kristin Spray declaring September 30, 2020 Orange Shirt Day in Saanich. Eddie Charlie has since approached Saanich Council requesting a letter of support to encourage the federal government to establish September 30 as National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

September 30 is symbolically named for the orange shirt Phyllis Webstad's grandmother gave to her on her first day of residential school. The shirt was immediately taken from her upon arrival at the school and never returned.

Approximately 150,000 Métis, Inuit and First Nations children were sent to residential schools between the 1860s and the 1990s, with the last residential school operating until 1996.

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde said, "Canada's Residential Schools were an attempt at genocide, they had a severe negative impact on our cultures, our nations, our languages, and for reconciliation to occur, Canada must right this wrong and help the former students and our nations recover and heal from this tragic history."

On September 29, Minister of Canadian Heritage Steven Guilbeault introduced House Government Bill C-5, seeking to establish a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

"An Act to amend the Bills of Exchange Act, the Interpretation Act and the Canada Labour Code (National Day for Truth and Reconciliation)."

Bill C-5 would amend certain Acts to make a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, observed on September 30. This national holiday would seek to honour Survivors, their families, and communities, and ensure public recognition of the disturbing history and legacy of residential schools. The reconciliation process requires this recognition of the harms committed against First Nation, Inuit and Métis people.

CONCLUSION

Endorsement of the above-noted recommendations acknowledges the past and ongoing harm residential schools inflicted on Canada's Indigenous people, and the necessity of reconciliation to build a more inclusive Canada.

Prepared by



Fred Haynes
Mayor

FH/m

Attachment