



G. C. C. E. I.
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Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)
Grand Conseil des Cris (Eeyou Istchee)

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Cree Nation Government
Gouvernement de la Nation Crie



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PRESS RELEASE

CREE NATION WELCOMES CUSTOMARY ADOPTION INTO QUEBEC LEGISLATION

NEMASKA, Eeyou Istchee (June 16, 2017) – The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and the Cree Nation Government (**GCC(EI)/CNG**) are pleased with the initiative of the Québec government to have legal effects of customary adoptions clearly reflected in the *Civil Code of Quebec* through Bill 113 (“*An Act to amend the Civil Code and other legislative provisions as regards adoption and the disclosure of information*”) (**Bill 113**), first tabled in the National Assembly in October 2016.

This includes amendments to Bill 113 further to representations of Indigenous stakeholders, including the Cree Nation, to include measures to recognize “temporary” customary adoptions, also known as “customary care”, which do not necessarily result in changes of filiation.

The Cree Nation welcomes the enactment of this legislation by the National Assembly. As stated by Dr. Matthew Coon Come, Grand Chief of the GCC(EI) and Chairman of the CNG, the Cree have sought changes to provincial legislation regarding customary adoption since the early 1980s and for almost as long, Québec has committed to doing so in the *Civil Code of Québec*.

“With the adoption of Bill 113, the Québec government is living up to the commitment it made so many years ago. We are pleased to see the years of hard work and collaborative efforts with Québec by the Cree and other Indigenous groups resulting in these changes to the *Civil Code* and other legislation,” said Dr. Coon Come.

For the Cree of Eeyou Istchee, customary adoption has been practiced for generations and continues to be practiced today. It remains an integral part of Cree culture and identity. The creation of the *Working Group on Customary Adoption in Aboriginal communities* (Working Group), made up of representatives from Québec and Indigenous organizations, including those of the Cree Nation, helped to facilitate important discussions regarding customary adoption. It was also an opportunity to collaboratively consider how its effects could be reflected in the *Civil Code of Québec*.



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“The changes resulting from Bill 113 are a positive first step in creating a bridge between different types of Indigenous customary adoptions and provincial legislation in order to clarify the legal effects of these adoptions, which have always been recognized in our communities and by our community members,” stated the Grand Chief.

“Bill 113 begins to harmonize provincial adoption legislation with Cree Aboriginal and treaty rights in relation to adoption matters and reflects the right of Indigenous Nations to govern affairs regarding their children”, continued the Grand Chief.

This legislation will benefit the children and families involved in customary adoptions in Québec by helping to facilitate the exercise of parental authorities and responsibilities.

The Cree Nation wishes to underline its support for the collaborative approach among the Indigenous stakeholders, the Québec Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Health and Social Services in relation to Bill 113.

In the words of the Grand Chief, “The adoption of this Bill represents another positive and important milestone in the relationship between Québec and Indigenous peoples, including the Cree Nation.”

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Source: Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) /
Cree Nation Government

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