



*Tsi Nahò:ten Karihwanákere Nó:nen'k*

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Iroquois Caucus Membership Citizenship Summit starts tomorrow in Akwesasne

### For Immediate Release

**(Kahnawake – 17, Onerahtókha/April 2018)** The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke wishes to advise the community that the Summit on Membership and Citizenship will take place tomorrow and Thursday (18 and 19, Onerahtókha/April) in Akwesásne. The Iroquois Caucus, which is organizing the event, has invited Traditional bodies to begin urgently-needed dialogue amongst leadership on how to respond to the imminent threat created by Canada's amendments to the *Indian Act* (S-3).

Grand Chief Joseph Tokwirot Norton and Ietsénhaienhs Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer will be attending on behalf of the MCK.

Canada's amendments, which were sparked by the Descheneaux Decision, could see upwards of a million new persons being eligible to be added to the federal list of 'Status Indians.'

"We could see up to 35,000 additional people eligible for Indian Status that could be tied to Kahnawà:ke *alone*," reiterated Ietsénhaienhs Sky-Deer. which "No doubt some of these people will try to identify themselves as citizens of the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation. Only the Traditional bodies can bestow citizenship – not elected councils and, most certainly, not Canada."

"Our people could provide a powerful voice if we can speak as a united front on this important matter," Grand Chief Norton stated earlier this month. "The time is now for discussion between the Traditional Haudenosaunee and the elected leadership. We must find the common ground necessary to prevent us from being overrun by people who, in many cases, have never set foot on our territories."

The Iroquois Caucus previously suggested a limit of six (6) representatives per Community for this first meeting. Aside from the MCK representatives, four (4) seats have been set aside for the two traditional bodies in Kahnawà:ke.

Please note that this preliminary meeting will not be open to the general public, though this may change in future meetings.

The Iroquois Caucus, which is comprised of elected leaders from Akwesásne, Kahnawà:ke, Kaneshatá:ke, Oneida of the Thames, Six Nations of the Grand River, Tyendinaga and Wahta.

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