



Tsi Nahò:ten Karihwanákere Nó:nen'k

PRESS RELEASE

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Ohén:ton Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs in D.C. to defend border rights

For Immediate Release

(Kahnawake – 3 Ohiarí:ha/June 2025) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) is pleased to announce that Ohén:ton Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs Chief Cody Diabo is in Washington, D.C. today and tomorrow, as part of the Jay Treaty Border Alliance (JTBA) delegation. This two-day advocacy effort includes key meetings with United States (U.S.) lawmakers and federal officials to address outdated U.S. legislation that continues to infringe on the rights of Onkwehón:we to freely cross the U.S.-Canada border.

The JTBA delegation is meeting with representatives from several congressional offices and the Department of Homeland Security to advance legislative reforms that would bring U.S. law in line with Indigenous rights and sovereignty.

The Alliance is advocating for the removal of discriminatory language in the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), particularly the requirement that individuals possess at least 50% “American Indian blood” to exercise cross-border rights recognized under the Jay Treaty of 1794. The proposed amendments would recognize citizenship or membership in a First Nations community—rather than blood quantum—as the basis for these rights.

“Onkwehón:we have long held the inherent right to move freely across our territories, regardless of international borders,” said Ohén:ton Í:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs Cody Diabo. “The current legal framework in the U.S. denies many of our people the ability to live, work, and connect with family across this artificial divide, based on an outdated and colonial definition of who we are. We’re here to push for legislative change that respects our sovereignty and our identity as Nations.”

The Jay Treaty Border Alliance is a grassroots coalition of tribal leaders and representatives working collaboratively to protect and uphold Indigenous border-crossing rights.

Diabo will return to Kahnawà:ke following the conclusion of the meetings.

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