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PRESS RELEASE

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Ratsénhaienhs Jeremiah Johnson reaffirms MCK opposition of Bill S-2 before Senate

For Immediate Release

(Kahnawake – 7 Onerahtohkó:wa/May 2026) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) wishes to announce that Ratsénhaienhs Jeremiah Johnson has addressed members of the Senate Standing Committee on Indigenous Peoples (the Committee) regarding MCK's opposition of Bill S-2 virtually on May 5, 2026.

Johnson's participation follows his previous address to the Committee in November 2025, reinforcing MCK's stance. Federal senators have since been reviewing sweeping amendments which would put an end to the Federal government's discretion to decide who is legally recognized as a First Nations person. Bill S-2 proposes to add thousands of individuals to the Indian Registry with the removal of the second generation cut off; which causes concerns that these individuals may seek residency within our community.

To date, there has been no dialogue or consultation with Kahnawà:ke on how this influx could affect potential services such as housing, governance, and laws. Johnson reminded the Committee of the Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke Law, established in 1981 and last amended in 2019, which was enacted through a consensus-based Community Decision-Making Process.

"If the second-generation cut-off is removed, population growth will continue long-term, further increasing pressure on housing, education, health, and governance. In short, Canada is expanding rights without ensuring the resources needed to uphold them, shifting the financial burden onto First Nations," said Ratsénhaienhs Jeremiah Johnson.

"While Bill S-2 expands federal recognition, granting status to thousands of people, it does so without a guaranteed increase in funding to First Nations communities, governments or federal programs. Most federal funding is based on outdated, capped formulas that do not automatically adjust when registration numbers grow," added Johnson.

The MCK does not recognize the Indian Act as the authority to determine who is and isn't Okwehonwe. We ask that the Committee respects Kahnawà:ke's jurisdiction over its own membership. This position has been upheld by Kahnawà:ke at the Kahnawà:ke-Canada Relations table for several years. The MCK urges this Committee to consider the broader implications of Bill S-2. If reconciliation is truly the goal, then Canada must stop legislating who we are as Kanien'kehá:ka.

"Kahnawà:ke has never, and will never, surrender its authority over its own citizenship." added Johnson.

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