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UNITY

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Wa'tkwanonhwerá:ton,

The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke Ratitsénhaienhs recognizes that the ongoing discussions surrounding the *Kahnawà:ke Residency Law ("the Law")* have brought forward strong opinions, deeply personal experiences and difficult conversations about belonging, responsibility and our collective future as a community. For many, it is about protecting Kahnawà:ke and its future. For others, it's about how the Law affects their families and connection to Kahnawà:ke. We understand that these are extremely difficult conversations to have and want to express how important they are to have in safer, more constructive ways.

We recognize that although these discussions have brought up amicable points towards potential solutions, they have also created a dialogue that is causing division. At times, the debate has become personal and hurtful, particularly through social media and other public forums. We understand that people feel strongly about this issue. We must, however, move forward in respectful ways. Difficult experiences are carried into these conversations, and some feel their connection to community is on trial. Questions about whether someone belongs, whether they can remain in their home or whether their family will continue to have a place in the community can have profound emotional and personal impacts. These are deeply personal matters for many and must be approached with care.

Community members want to protect Kahnawà:ke; they want decisions affecting residency and belonging to respect the collective interests of the community. At the same time, they want our processes to be fair, respectful and capable of recognizing the realities faced by our own people.

The Ratitsénhaienhs continue to meet with and listen to community members who have raised concerns about the *Kahnawà:ke Residency Law* and its real-world implications. We have heard different experiences and perspectives, including those who do not support the Law and those who support the Law but have concerns with its application.

We hear those concerns and stress the importance to recognize that the *Kahnawà:ke Residency Law* was developed through a communal process. It is not a Law that the Ratitsénhaienhs can simply disregard or unilaterally rewrite when concerns arise.

The community members who participated in creating and shaping the Law through the Community Decision Making and Review Process (CDMRP) invested significant time and effort in trying to protect the collective interests of Kahnawa'kehró:non. That work must be respected. At the same time, respecting the Law does not mean that we should ignore circumstances where its administration, processes or impacts raise legitimate concerns.

We have seen and recognize that there are real situations that require careful examination. There are circumstances facing individuals and families today that may not have been fully contemplated when regulations and processes were developed within the Law. Those concerns deserve to be examined in a responsible way, within the appropriate processes in the CDMRP.

We must also remember that behind every application, complaint, decision and discussion is a person, a family and, in many cases, generations of connection to Kahnawà:ke.

Understanding different perspectives does not require everyone to agree with them. It does require us to listen. For the Ratitsénhaienhs effective governance requires both protecting the collective and recognizing the humanity of the individuals affected by the decisions we make.

The feedback received through meetings and discussions to date has identified areas where the community believes improvements should be considered. The Ratitsénhaienhs and members of the Office of the Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke have met with community members during and after the protest on November 16, 2026, and with a collective of Kahnawa'kehró:non women on November 19, 2026.

These discussions surrounded how people are informed of the options available to them; how the AKR application process operates; how privacy and public notification are handled; whether complaint processes provide adequate safeguards against misuse or personal disputes; and whether the Law and supporting processes sufficiently address complex family and individual circumstances.

To date, the following recommendations have been discussed:

- Exploring avenues to amend the Law and its regulations through formal processes;

· Considering amending how applicants to AKR postings are made, excluding social media as part of the public posting process;

· Ensuring AKR criteria is met with applicants having three great-grandparents, or two great-grandparents with family ties and more than half of one's life lived here;

- Considering community members who many qualify for AKR/KKR but choose not to register by forming a vetting process with the traditional bodies; and

· Continuing to encourage individuals to apply for AKR;

Any path forward must respect the CDMRP and the authority of Kahnawa'kehró:non within that process. The aim is not to work around the Law or the community members who participate in

the law making process. The goal is to determine where improvements may be possible and, where changes to the Law itself may need to be considered.

We believe it is possible to protect the principles behind the *Kahnawà:ke Residency Law* while also examining whether its processes and application can be improved.

The Ratitsénhaienhs have invited the traditional bodies within Kahnawà:ke to engage directly with Council on these matters. There may be fundamental differences in perspectives regarding governance, law and authority, but those differences should not prevent us from sitting together when the well-being of Kahnawà:ke is at stake.

The Ratitsénhaienhs believe there is an opportunity to identify where our interests align and to work collaboratively on solutions that strengthen the community. That same responsibility belongs to all of us as Kahnawa'kehró:non.

Disagreement is part of any healthy community. Personal attacks, harassment and lateral violence do not bring us closer to resolve. They make it more difficult for people to speak honestly, harder for us to hear one another and harder to find the common ground required to move forward.

The Ratitsénhaienhs are asking Kahnawa'kehró:non to approach the next phase of these discussions with more respect for one another, with an openness to listen, and with a willingness to search for solutions as a collective. The door for dialogue with the Ratitsénhaienhs is always open and community members are encouraged to reach out and share their perspectives.

The Residency Law addresses serious questions about protecting Kahnawà:ke for future generations. We must be able to have those conversations without losing compassion for the people affected today.

There will not necessarily be one solution that satisfies every person or every perspective. But there can be a process that is driven by Kahnawa'kehró:non, respectful and fair.

We will continue listening and assessing the concerns that need to be brought forward and will work toward a solution that protects the collective interests of Kahnawà:ke, its laws and processes, while recognizing the dignity and circumstances of our people.

We are hopeful to work alongside the community on this important matter, as collectivity must remain at the heart of how we speak to one another, how we make decisions and how we move forward. Respectfully,

OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CHIEFS



Ohén:ton I:rate ne Ratitsénhaienhs
Grand Chief Cody Diabo of Kahnawake