

**Conseil Cri de la santé et des services sociaux de la Baie James**

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**Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay**

## PRESS RELEASE

### CBHSSJB WELCOMES BILL ON CUSTOMARY ADOPTION

**CHISASIBI, QUÉBEC (October 6, 2016)** - The Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB) is pleased to be associated with the introduction of Bill 113 ("**An Act to amend the Civil Code and other legislative provisions as regards adoption and the disclosure of information**") (Bill 113), tabled today in the National Assembly.

The CBHSSJB applauds the initiative of the Québec government, and particularly the Minister of Justice, to have legal effects of customary adoptions clearly reflected in the *Civil Code of Quebec*.

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, the Inuit and First Nations organizations including the CBHSSJB, helped to facilitate important discussions regarding customary adoption.

As stated by the Chairperson of the CBHSSJB, Mrs. Bella Moses-Petawabano, "the Working Group was also an opportunity to collaboratively consider how the effects of customary adoption could be reflected in the *Civil Code of Québec*, along with certain changes to the *Youth Protection Act*".

"This collaborative process continued through the development of Bill 113, as was the case with previous bills tabled in 2012 and 2013 regarding customary adoption", she declared.

Indeed, the CBHSSJB, along with the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and the Cree Nation Government (**GCC(EI)/CNG**), actively participated not only in the significant work of the Working Group, but also contributed to the collaborative work with the Government of Québec and other Indigenous organizations regarding Bill 113.

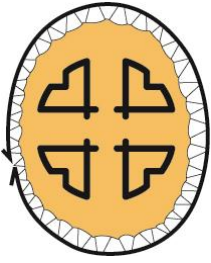
The CBHSSJB wishes to underline its support for the collaborative approach among the Indigenous stakeholders, the Québec Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Health and Social Services in the development of Bill 113.

Ultimately, this legislation will benefit the children and families involved in customary adoptions by helping to facilitate the exercise of parental authorities and responsibilities. The CBHSSJB intends to continue its involvement in the legislative process relating to Bill 113, in close collaboration with the GCC(EI)/CNG.

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Source: Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

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**Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay**

**About the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay:**

The Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB) is responsible for the administration of health and social services for all persons residing either permanently or temporarily in Region 18, pursuant to Section 14 of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* and *An Act respecting health services and social services for Cree Native persons* (CLQR chapter S-5).

This administrative region of the Ministry of Health and Social Services of Quebec is made up of the Category I and II lands of Eeyou Istchee, James Bay, in northern Québec, and includes nine Cree communities. The CBHSSJB serves a population of almost 17,000, mostly Cree, and a small minority of non-Cree, in this territory.