



REGROUPEMENT
DES CENTRES
D'AMITIÉ AUTOCHTONES
DU QUÉBEC INC.



FEMMES AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC INC.
QUEBEC NATIVE WOMEN INC.

**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE BROADCAST**

Youth Protection Act (YPA):

Aboriginal groups who are concerned about the application of Bill 125 as presented by the Quebec government

QUEBEC – February 21st, 2006 – “Bill 125 does not take into account the cultural and social realities of Aboriginal youth and their families!” That is the conclusion of the memorandum presented by Quebec Native Women (QNW) and the Regroupement des centres d’amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ), to the parliamentary committee regarding the *Youth Protection Act*.

According to the organizations representing Quebec Aboriginal Friendship Centres and Aboriginal women, government must recognize the particular context of Aboriginal communities and it must collaborate with them. The memorandum explains that: “the Quebec government never really made any effort towards implementing a social policy adapted to the various Aboriginal Nations (...) we estimate that removing a child from their environment can only create choc because during this period, the child is neither with his family, his culture and he is removed from his lifestyle”.

According to QNW president, Mrs. Ellen Gabriel, Bill 125 proposes coercive measures rather than solutions based on existing resources. “Does the government want to repeat last century’s disastrous effects of Native Residential Schools? Aboriginals have means and resources, Mrs. Gabriel explained, and provide the necessary latitude to develop, improve and expand the infrastructures in order to protect children and their families!”

The president of the RCAAQ, Mrs. Édith Cloutier, is worried about the human dimension when applying Bill 125, particularly the delays for intervening with the parents are extremely limiting considering the accessibility of the resources and the remoteness of the communities. “Also, the extended family is not recognized by the Bill, even though it represents a determining factor in the social system of various Aboriginal nations”, explains Mrs. Cloutier.

The memorandum presented by the partner organizations presents several recommendations to the parliamentary committee which aim at highlighting the problems with its current application and possible solutions.

Quebec Native Women (QNW) is a non-profit political organization that argues for the rights and interests of Aboriginal women and their families. QNW is mandated to support the effort of Aboriginal women in improving their conditions and those of their families, while supporting them in their community involvement.

Le Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ) is an organization that argues in favour of the rights and interests of Aboriginal individuals and collectives that deal with urban reality.

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**Regroupement des centres d'amitié
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