



REGROUPEMENT
DES CENTRES D'AMITIÉ
AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release



Bill 32: The RCAAQ Applauds This First Important Step

Wendake, December 5, 2024—The Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ) welcomes the adoption of Bill 32, *An Act to establish the cultural safety approach within the health and social services network*, legislation intended to improve the overall wellness of Indigenous populations. The RCAAQ considers this bill, which was tabled last year, a historic milestone in improving First Nations and Inuit quality of life.

During the consultations that followed the tabling of the bill, the RCAAQ made several recommendations to the government, including the inclusion of impact measures and mechanisms, the development of training programs in conjunction with Indigenous organizations, including Native Friendship Centres, and access to support resources. It also stressed the need to establish a relationship of co-construction at every stage of the decision-making process—a reminder us that cultural safety cannot be achieved with a unilateral approach, whether carried out exclusively by the government or by First Peoples.

Advocated by the Quebec Native Friendship Centre Movement for over a decade, the cultural safety approach is best observed in the creation of Indigenous health clinics. Developed in partnership with Quebec's health and social services network, these clinics offer front-line health care and are a tool for decolonization and a lever for systemic transformation.

The RCAAQ insisted that Bill 32's fundamental goals include tangible improvements to the living and health conditions of First Nations members and the Inuit. Legislating cultural safety means a joint societal commitment to making real, measurable changes to significantly reduce the gaps between the Indigenous and the greater Quebec populations.

Quote:

"This is an opportunity for the government to bring about systemic change, to tangibly advance its public policies in response to Indigenous realities and to recognize the specificity of Friendship Centres' urban Indigenous governance. Ultimately, we want this bill to extend beyond the health and social services network so its principles and guidelines are applied harmoniously across government ministries and agencies."

—*Tanya Sirois, Executive Director*

About the Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec

The Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec is made up of a network of 11 Friendship Centres in 14 Quebec cities that offer Indigenous people culturally relevant and safe services that contribute to the harmony and reconciliation between peoples in Quebec cities. The



Native Friendship Centres are the largest urban service infrastructure for Indigenous people, offering a range of integrated services in a variety of sectors, including wellness, health, social services, social inclusion, education, employability, early childhood, youth, and much more.

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