



FEMMES AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC INC.
QUEBEC NATIVE WOMEN INC.



PRESS RELEASE

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BILL ON CULTURAL SAFETY IN HEALTHCARE: INSUFFICIENT AND DISAPPOINTING FOR JOYCE'S PRINCIPLE OFFICE AND QUEBEC NATIVE WOMEN

Kahnawake, June 9, 2023 - Today, the Legault government tabled its bill, titled *An Act to establish the cultural safety approach within the health and social services network*, in the Salon bleu of the National Assembly. While Quebec Native Women (QNW) and Joyce's Principle Office, the office overseeing Joyce's Principle in the community of Manawan, do endorse the overall cultural safety principles it contains, several elements are missing and must be highlighted.

With this bill, QNW and Joyce's Principle Office welcome, among other things, the implementation of one of the recommendations of the Viens Commission, and the fact that all establishments of the health and social services network will be subjected to the principles of cultural safety.

It is also true that the team of Ian Lafrenière, Minister of Relations with First Nations and Inuit, discussed a bill on cultural safety with QNW last August. That being said, Indigenous organizations do not share the Quebec government's definition of cultural safety.

QNW and Joyce's Principle Office's position, which is also supported by the Atikamekw Council of Manawan, remains clear on this subject: it is essential to recognize the existence of systemic racism and discrimination and to adopt Joyce's Principle in order to ensure the full and complete protection of Indigenous people, in particular women and girls, while respecting the specificities of each distinct Indigenous nation.

"The current bill cannot act as a substitute for the adoption of Joyce's Principle. The government is ignoring our recommendations and is showing its inconsistency by drawing inspiration from Joyce's Principle, while refusing once again to adopt it. The latest mobilizations led by Indigenous organizations and experts have shown us that the only way to build trust between the government and Indigenous Peoples is to adopt Joyce's Principle and recognize the existence of systemic racism and discrimination. As of now, the government and its bill do not meet our expectations", deplores Jennifer Petiquay-Dufresne, Executive Director of Joyce's Principle Office.

QNW and Joyce's Principle Office intend to appear before parliamentary committee to express their concerns, particularly to reiterate the importance of adopting Joyce's Principle and recognizing the existence of systemic racism and discrimination. Both organizations consider it essential to include and involve Indigenous organizations, individuals, and experts in the elaboration of this bill, as well as in the evolution of cultural safety concepts.

"Our organizations will certainly be present during the work of the Parliamentary Commission on the cultural safety bill. QNW has been representing and defending the interests and rights of Indigenous women in Quebec for nearly 50 years. We draw on decades of expertise, experience and knowledge of the issues and realities of Indigenous women and girls, and we know exactly what's right for us. The time has come for the

Quebec government to really listen to us, to adopt Joyce's Principle, and to recognize the existence of systemic racism and discrimination, once and for all", says Marjolaine Étienne, President of Quebec Native Women.

About QNW

Founded in 1974, Quebec Native Women is a non-profit organization representing Quebec First Nations and urban Indigenous women.

About Joyce's Principle Office

Joyce's Principle Office, created following the tragic death of Joyce Echaquan in September 2020 at the Hôpital de Joliette, aims to have Joyce's Principle adopted by various bodies, including the Quebec government.

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Sources:

Quebec Native Women \ <https://faq-qnw.org/>

Bureau du Principe de Joyce \ <https://principedejoyce.com/fr/index>

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