



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**AMENDMENT TO BILL C-31, 40 YEARS LATER: A STEP TOWARD JUSTICE, BUT  
NOT THE END OF THE ROAD**

**Kahnawà:ke, April 17, 2025** – Forty years ago, the amendments to Bill C-31 of the Indian Act marked a crucial step in recognizing the rights of Indigenous women in Canada. This amendment allowed women who had lost their status after marrying a non-Indigenous person to regain it, ending a long-standing discriminatory clause embedded in federal legislation.

Today, Quebec Native Women (QNW) highlights this anniversary, emphasizing that despite this legal progress, the fight for equality and full recognition of Indigenous women's rights remains ongoing. The impact of this historic reform corrected a glaring injustice, yet systemic effects of discrimination are still felt within communities, more specifically by First Nations women.

QNW also honors the remarkable work of pioneers who championed this cause long before the adoption of the amendments of Bill C-31. Among them, the Mohawk activist Mary Two Axe Early, one of the instigators of this movement, who courageously denounced injustices and fought relentlessly for the recognition of Indigenous women's rights. Her dedication, along with that of many other activists, initiated essential change, even though some inequalities persist.

Indeed, certain provisions of the Indian Act continue to uphold gender-based discrimination, affecting the transmission of status and the rights of Indigenous women and their descendants. It is crucial to continue mobilizing efforts to eliminate these barriers and achieve true equality.

"This amendment marked a significant advance, but there is still work to be done to ensure that Indigenous women's rights are fully respected, without any form of discrimination. We must and will continue to mobilize and raise awareness in our communities and society to build a fairer and more equitable future," stated Marjolaine Étienne, President of Quebec Native Women.

On this day of commemoration, Quebec Native Women reaffirms its commitment to raising awareness, educating, and mobilizing to ensure true equity and unconditional respect for the rights of Indigenous women.

**About QNW**

Quebec Native Women is a non-profit organization that has been representing First Nations women in Quebec as well as Indigenous women living in urban areas for 50 years.

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