



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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STATEMENT
For Immediate Release

August 31, 2026

BCAFN Mourns the Loss of First Nations Leader and MLA Joan Phillip

(Lheidli T'enneh Territory/Prince George, BC) BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) is mourning the passing of beloved leader and warrior Joan Phillip (Amshen). Joan passed away on Friday, August 28th, 2026, surrounded by her loved ones and immediate family.

Upon her election to the Vancouver-Mount Pleasant seat with the BC NDP, Joan became the second First Nations woman to serve in British Columbia's Legislative Assembly. She carried the legacy of our ancestors into British Columbia politics with immense strength and dignity, serving as a protector of our lands, peoples, and future.

BCAFN sends our deepest condolences to Joan's family, especially her husband, Grand Chief Stewart Phillip (UBCIC President), her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and all who were blessed to know her. We acknowledge and honour the deep strength and resilience of her family and community, who supported and stood alongside her in the tireless fight to protect our lands and future from industrial harms and environmental degradation. Joan was a beacon of resistance and hope for First Nations and all British Columbians.

Join us to celebrate Joan's life, legacy, and the powerful example she set for First Nations leadership within our Nations, across the province and throughout Canada.

In place of flowers, donations in her memory can be made to the BC Cancer Society to support others facing illness. Funeral services will take place on Wednesday, September 2, 2026, at Outma Sqilx'w Cultural School, Penticton, BC, at 10:00 AM.

Mussi Cho (thank you), Joan, for your spirit, friendship and strength. Your legacy continues within us all, and we will carry it forward with honour.

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