

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

News Release

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FNLCC Celebrates Introduction of Legislation recognizing Haida Nation Title

(xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), s̓kwx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tseil-waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLCC) is honoured to witness today's introduction of Bill 25 (the *Haida Nation Recognition Amendment Act*), in the B.C. Legislature. When passed, the Act will see the Province recognize the Haida Nation's Aboriginal title throughout Haida Gwaii.

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, UBCIC President, stated "For years the Supreme Court of Canada has clearly and repeatedly called on the Crown to negotiate with First Nations to reconcile their rights and interests with those of the broader public. Despite this, and in violation of domestic and international law, the Crown has long sought to deny First Nations our most basic inherent, constitutional, and human rights through costly and deeply offensive court proceedings. Today is an incredible step forward toward addressing the deep colonial harms that have been waged upon our people and jointly creating a path forward."

Robert Phillips of the First Nations Summit Political Executive continued, "The signing of the historic Gaayhllid • Gíhlagalang "Rising Tide" Haida Title Lands Agreement and the introduction of Bill 25 represent a significant step forward in relations between First Nations and the Crown. By choosing to negotiate with the Haida Nation based on recognition, rather than litigate with the goal of denial, the current provincial government has shown that it is committed to the difficult but vital work of reconciliation. We look forward to working with them in ensuring that all First Nations in B.C. similarly receive their long overdue recognition."

"For the first time a Crown government has recognized Aboriginal title through agreement, all while thoughtfully and innovatively balancing the interests of fee simple landowners on Haida Gwaii with the inherent and constitutionally protected title, rights, and jurisdiction of the Haida Nation, stated Regional Chief Terry Teegee, B.C. Assembly of First Nations. "This world leading achievement is something that all British Columbians should celebrate and be proud of."

We congratulate the Haida Nation and the provincial government on their tremendous and momentous accomplishment.

The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), First Nations Summit (FNS), and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC).

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