

Statement

Senator Lillian Eva Dyck | Senator Dennis Patterson | Senator Murray Sinclair



Senators seek end to gender-based *Indian Act* discrimination

Ottawa, June 22, 2017 – Today, the Government Representative in the Senate informed the Senate that he would adjourn his motion on Bill S-3, [*An Act to amend the Indian Act \(elimination of sex-based inequities in registration\)*](#) to the next sitting of the Senate in September 2017.

As a result, we believe the Government of Canada has no choice but to seek an extension from the Superior Court of Quebec to the deadline of July 3, 2017 imposed in the case of *Descheneaux c. Canada (Procureur Général)*. In August 2015 the court rendered sections of the *Indian Act* inoperative after finding that they infringe on the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The court temporarily suspended the declaration of invalidity so the government could make changes to the act.

We support not proceeding with Bill S-3 as amended by the House of Commons at this time as this will provide additional time for Parliament's consideration of the elimination of gender-based inequities in Indian registration.

The additional time will also enable the government to explore and research the impacts of potential solutions to concerns over proposed remedies brought forward by witnesses who have appeared in front of the Senate and House of Commons committees that studied the bill.

Senators have listened to First Nations women, the *Descheneaux* plaintiffs, legal experts and Indigenous groups; we believe that their voices must be included in resolving all gender-based discrimination in the *Indian Act*.

We look forward to working with the government in a productive and cooperative manner to address gender-based discrimination in Indian registration.

Senator Lillian Eva Dyck

Chair, Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples

Senator Dennis Patterson

Deputy Chair, Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples

Senator Murray Sinclair

Steering committee member, Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples

Associated Links

- Read the Superior Court of Quebec decision in [*Descheneaux c. Canada \(Procureur Général\)*](#).
- Follow the Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples on social media using the hashtag **#APPA**.
- Sign up for the Senate's [eNewsletter](#).

For more information, please contact:

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