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CONCERNS ABOUT CARBON-PRICING EXEMPTIONS FOR FARMERS FROM FSIN EXECUTIVE

Treaty 6 Territory, Saskatoon SK – The Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) is concerned about Bill C-234, a carbon-pricing exemption for farmers. FSIN declares that farmers should not benefit from program incentives while First Nations' constitutionally protected rights are ignored.

FSIN sees the exemption for farmers as the government appeasing to its' base and ignoring the ever-increasing climate change crisis and its impacts to the environment. The exemptions provided to farmers should concern those who are working toward creating a better environment for this generation and those to follow.

FSIN Chief Bobby Cameron calls on all levels of government to treat all interest groups equally and proclaims that the only group that should be provided exemptions are the First Nations in this country, given that our Nations in this country are poverty-stricken, have poor infrastructure, and will ultimately feel the effects of climate change before others.

The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food finished its study of Bill C-234 in November. The private member's bill would exempt certain agricultural activities from federal carbon pricing and would amend the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* to add natural gas and propane used to dry grain and heat livestock barns to the list of farm fuels which includes gasoline and diesel that is already exempt from the federal price on pollution. The Liberal Party opposes the Bill however it is expected to pass a vote in the House.

The NDP and Conservative positions are that the exemption for farmers is required because they have no other viable options for fuel for grain dryers in particular. The grain dryers are used when wet weather causes the grain to be harvested with excess moisture.

The Bill also includes a sunset clause wherein the exemption will end after eight years however there's an option to extend the exemption if there are no viable solutions after eight years. The Liberals note that the Bill will not encourage investment in the development of alternative technology because of the carbon-pricing exemption and argue that an increase in access to financing for farmers to move to renewable energy would be a better option. Federations of Sovereign Indigenous Nations does not endorse and have allegiance to any political party.

QUOTES

“FSIN is willing to work with governments to find ways to reduce the impacts of climate change, and to ensure that Nations in this province receive the resources they require to address it within their territories,” said FSIN Forth Vice Chief Heather Bear.

“It seems that farmers are always benefiting from programs that impact everyone, like the carbon-pricing Bill C-234. Farmers and ranchers also benefit from Crown land sales where they get first choice to purchase Crown lands if they’re currently leasing the lands. This needs to stop. Our Nations’ citizens need to be able to live off the land like we were promised under Treaty, but that looks less likely when our territories are taken up by industry and agriculture, our waters and lands are polluted and our medicines are destroyed – all at the hands of the number one polluter of water which is agriculture,” said FSIN Forth Vice Chief Heather Bear.

“Governments must work with First Nations in Saskatchewan to address climate change and its potential impacts to our Nations, given our Nations’ vulnerabilities instead of continually providing advantages to the agricultural industry that destroys our environment,” said FSIN Forth Vice Chief Heather Bear.

“When government continues to provide benefits to one industry that does the most damage to our sacred waters, that’s when First Nations need to speak up and say that enough is enough. It’s like government is giving farmers the right to continue to destroy our precious lands and medicines, the water that gives us life but it’s only for eight more years, and maybe another eight more. We should be looking at safer practices for the environment and our waters. Our children, everyone’s children, are depending on us,” said FSIN Chief Bobby Cameron.

About FSIN

The Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations represents 74 First Nations in Saskatchewan. The Federation is committed to honouring the spirit and intent of the Treaties, as well as the promotion, protection and implementation of the Treaty promises that were made more than a century ago.

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