

News Release

Families of the National Family Advisory Circle Supports the National Inquiry

July 12, 2017 We are the National Family Advisory Circle (NFAC) which is a group of MMIWG Families We were invited by the National Inquiry Commission to provide guidance, advice and support to the Commissioners. We work within a Terms of Reference to provide this guidance. Some of us are survivors as well. Some of us have been fighting for over forty years for our voices to be heard. We have been fighting for the stories of our missing and murdered women and girls to be told. We are fortunate to have the Federal Government hear our pleas to grant a National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

Establishing a Commission for our loved ones is a monumental task. The Commissioners had to start the National Inquiry from nothing and they are learning as they go as we all are. The process is not perfect but nothing ever is. The Commissioners have reached out to utilize the NFAC to help them in their work as they move along, albeit the relationship was slow to grow. It is now a relationship where the Commissioners consult with the NFAC for guidance on a regular basis.

There are a number of concerns that have been issued from families, individuals and organizations who signed on to the Open Letter that was issued to Commissioner Buller on June 15, 2017 We understand the concerns that they presented and the response from the Commission was done in consultation with the NFAC. We understand and agree with some of the issues however these are being rectified and part of the process is being guided by the NFAC.

We are aware of the criticism that is being stated from various individuals and organizations, regionally, provincially and nationally, that are calling for a reset of the Inquiry and demanding resignations from the Commissioners. This was especially heard this week with the resignation of Commissioner Marilyn Poitras and the other staff within the last several weeks. Please note that establishing Inquiries is difficult and that staff will resign from time to time. With this Inquiry being unique and distinct, it is under extreme scrutiny from those groups, individuals or organizations that may not be in support of a National Inquiry. However, the NFAC stand with the Commissioners and support the huge volume of work that they will accomplish in a short timeframe. We ask for patience as the Commissioners work with families to present their stories of their loved ones and document for the public record. We trust that these stories will contribute to changes within the justice systems and contribute to a violence free society for future generations of Indigenous women and girls.

We humbly acknowledge the hard work of all families who fought for this inquiry. It has been a difficult road that we journey on together. We need to support, uphold and lift each other up during this inquiry. In order to preserve and have the Inquiry a success for all of our families, we encourage all nations to work together and move the National Inquiry forward in a good way. Let's examine solution based processes in our work on behalf of our loved ones.

Please join us in our support of the Commissioners and their work. It is imperative that the National Inquiry continues with its work plans, summer community visits and community hearings planned for the fall. If you are able to help or volunteer, please

reach out to the National Inquiry Community Liaison staff who would welcome assistance in your territory.

In unity and respect,

The National Family Advisory Circle

Released by the National Family Advisory Circle

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