



Nishnawbe Aski Nation  
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**Fort William  
First Nation**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

Tuesday September 26, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **THUNDER BAY FAILS TO SUPPORT CALL FOR SENATOR'S RESIGNATION**

**THUNDER BAY, ON:** Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler and Fort William First Nation Chief Peter Collins have issued the following statements as Thunder Bay City Council has failed to support a motion by the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) calling for the resignation of Senator Lynn Beyak.

"It is unconscionable that City Council failed to support this call for the resignation of Senator Lynn Beyak after her insulting and racist comments. Just last month we signed a Statement of Commitment with the City to fight racism and make Thunder Bay a safer, more welcoming place for First Nation people. Council's failure to act is extremely disappointing and goes against the spirit of that commitment," said Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler. "It is deeply insulting that Council celebrated the editorial section of a local newspaper, which has a long and dismal record of printing inflammatory and insulting comments against First Nations, but failed to show solidarity for victims of the Residential School experience. The excuses made by members of Council for their failure to act are cowardly and an embarrassment for Thunder Bay and northwestern Ontario. Reconciliation is meaningless without action, and Council missed a significant opportunity to stand with us."

"As Chief of Fort William First Nation, on which the traditional territory the city of Thunder Bay is built, we see this as another setback in the development of positive relationships with the municipality. Our Council signed a Declaration of Commitment with the City in 2011, and most recently the tri-lateral Statement of Commitment with NAN and the City. The lack of knowledge and understanding demonstrated by some members of City Council on these issues is a barrier to the reconciliation we are working so hard to achieve," said Fort William First Nation Chief Peter Collins.

A motion by Coun. Shelby Ch'ng recognized NOMA's condemnation of Senator Beyak's comments in defense of the Indian Residential School system. It requested that Council support NOMA's call for her resignation from the Senate of Canada.

Voting against the motion was Mayor Keith Hobbs, Coun. Rebecca Johnson, Coun. Linda Rydholm, Coun. Joe Virdiramo, Coun. Brian McKinnon and Coun. Trevor Giertuga.

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