



## NEWS RELEASE

### **Kill education bill now: Madahbee**

UOI OFFICES (Nipissing First Nation) May 6, 2014 – The Minister of Indian Affairs shouldn't be delaying his proposed First Nations education legislation, says Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee. He should be disposing of the badly-flawed bill right now.

"First Nations have been developing their own systems for years and we don't need the Minister of Indian Affairs looking over our shoulders," says Madahbee, responding to Indian Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt's statement that Bill C-33 – the so-called First Nations Control of First Nations Education Act – would be put on hold until the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) "clarifies its position".

"The fact that the minister is waiting for the AFN to come up with another position shows us that his government really doesn't value the voice of First Nation citizens, because the First Nation opposition to Bill C-33 is pretty clear," says Madahbee. "The message the minister should be taking from Shawn Atleo's resignation is that the National Chief recognized that First Nations across Canada don't want this legislation.

"Our people have told their leaders they don't want Stephen Harper or Bernard Valcourt dictating how First Nations children should be educated."

"They want that bill killed right now."

The Grand Council Chief referred to a special Chiefs' assembly being planned for May 14 in Ottawa.

"The AFN is a First Nations organization and it is supposed to reflect the voice of First Nations peoples. The national chief's resignation resulted from the organization getting caught up in the federal conservative agenda. National Chief Atleo and some members of the AFN executive were given false expectations by a manipulative government.

"The purpose of this meeting will be to re-focus the Assembly of First Nations on its original purpose – to serve as a voice for the people. We Chiefs are just advocates."

Madahbee said he planned on participating in the May 14 assembly, and to demonstrate support for a major rally being staged the same day on Parliament Hill to draw attention to over 1,000 Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women in Canada.

"It's a national disgrace that the Prime Minister continues to reject a public inquiry," he said. "No one in Canada should have to live in fear for their personal safety."

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The Anishinabek Nation established the Union of Ontario Indians as its secretariat in 1949. The UOI is a political advocate for 39 member communities across Ontario, representing approximately 55,000 people. The Union of Ontario Indians is the oldest political organization in Ontario and can trace its roots back to the Confederacy of Three Fires, which existed long before European contact.

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