



GITXAALA NATION

PO Box 149 11 Ocean Drive Kitkatla, BC V0V 1C0 Phone 250.848.2214 Fax 250.848.2238

GITXAALA NATION OPPOSITION TO BILLS 14 AND 15.

LAX KLAN, DOLPHIN ISLAND, B.C. – May 29, 2025 – Gitxaala Nation’s Lu Sa Hax Hoyaxgm Wil’nat’aał, the joint committee of Hereditary Chiefs and elected Council, have reviewed the text of both Bills 14 and 15 and joining the many Indigenous leaders across the Province in condemnation of both pieces of legislation due to their fundamental inconsistency with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

In a letter sent to Premier David Eby and members of the Provincial Cabinet before the Bills were passed, the Lu Sa Hax Hoyaxgm Wil’nat’aał expressed their concerns over the development of this legislation without the consultation and cooperation with Title and Rights holders that is legally required under BC’s *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA)*. The letter stated that this government’s empty apologies with no corrective action was an unacceptable continuation of the same colonial practices his government has committed to end.

Gitxaala’s concerns with the proposed Bills are based on a legacy and history of having our inherent and constitutionally protected Rights and Title devalued, overlooked, and set aside, without consultation, accommodation or meaningful steps towards reconciliation.

“The proposed legislation continues this legacy of ignoring our Rights and Title” said Elmer Moody, Co-Chair of LSHH, “ Even suggesting that major projects with potentially significant adverse impacts on our Nation’s Rights and Title, could be allowed through an ‘expedited process’ with no clear pathways for adequate consultation nor free, prior and informed consent goes against the Governments commitments to reconciliation and is deeply disrespectful of Gitxaala’s *adaawx, ayaawx and gugwilx’ya’ansk* (our history, laws, practices, and inheritance)”.

The BC Government’s promise to co-develop regulations after passing this highly problematic legislation and to uphold the Crown’s duty to consult are inadequate, as the legislation itself provides no such statements.

“As Gitxaala has experienced in court recently, the Province has repeatedly dismissed and ignored its own legal and political commitments.” said Linda Innes, Elected Chief Councillor, “The BC Government has already demonstrated that it’s commitments to reconciliation are a matter of convenience, as Gitxaala witnessed first hand when the Province’s lawyers vehemently argued against the justiciability of DRIPA in Gitxaala’s Mineral Tenure Case on appeal to the BC Court of Appeal.” Gitxaala is still waiting for the Court of Appeal’s decision on the case.

Gitxaala’s authority and jurisdiction to our territory has never been ceded or surrendered. All of *Ntuut’iksgm Laxyuubm Gitxaala* (sacred Gitxaala Territory) is under the Nation’s jurisdiction, as these are the lands and waters that have sustained our Nation for thousands and thousands of



GITXAALA NATION

PO Box 149 11 Ocean Drive Kitkatla, BC V0V 1C0 Phone 250.848.2214 Fax 250.848.2238

years, and have been governed following our own processes, rules, and regulations in accordance with Gitxaala's adaawx, ayaawx and gugwilx'ya'ansk. Despite this legal reality, Bill 14 specifically identifies a number of locations within Ntuut'iksgm Laxyuubm Gitxaala.

"If the Provincial government was truly interested in 'fast-tracking' sustainable economic development, this legislation would have explicit references to the need for consent and set clear requirements that allow Indigenous Title Holders like Gitxaala to obtain the information we require to make our own informed decisions about developments in our territories." said Clarence Innes, Co-chair of the LSHH.

Gitxaala Nation understands Bills 14 and 15 have now passed. In response Gitxaala will continue to instruct all levels of government and any proponents seeking to develop projects in Ntuut'iksgm Laxyuubm Gitxaala that the Nation's jurisdiction and laws must be respected. This includes the identification of any projects that may be deemed in the 'public interest' by the provincial or federal government. Gitxaala demands any such projects must meet the requirements of the Nation before they can be included in any 'fast-tracked' or 'expedited' processes. Gitxaala's requirements are based on Gitxaala law and are essential to enable our Nation to provide its free, prior, and Informed consent for any development in Ntuut'iksgm Laxyuubm Gitxaala.

About Gitxaala Nation

The people of the Gitxaala Nation have lived on the North Coast of British Columbia, including the Prince Rupert Harbour Area, since time immemorial and are one of the most ancient societies in the region.

Media Contact:

Michael Uehara

General Secretary

Lu Sa Hax Hoyagm Wil'nat'aat

604-551-0145