



SPUZZUM FIRST NATION

Our Land. Our Future. Our Success. Forward Focused Nation Building.

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November 30th, 2021

Minister François-Philippe Champagne,
Minister of Innovation, Science, and Industry
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Email: Francois-Philippe.Champagne@parl.gc.ca

Re: AFN Resolution #19 High-Speed Internet in Remote Communities

Honourable Francois-Phillipe Champagne,

From time immemorial Indigenous Peoples have been righteous of their presence. Many First Nations acknowledge in prayer seven sacred directions: North, South, West, and East, while similarly mindful of downward, upward, and inward. For many First Nations, these acknowledgements are considered equally important in creating harmony and balance - balance that sustains our way of life as well as our resilience.

When we share our stories with our youth, we speak of how our Ancestors are all around us. We speak of our sacred protectors, the winged ones, our messengers who warn us of danger or changes in the environment. The province of BC signing DRIPA into legislation in 2019 acknowledges Indigenous Peoples never relinquished title on their land, nor the airspace above. It is our inherent right to utilize all resources available for us to sustain our well-being along with our fellow relatives who share our lands and all that is within them.

The Covid-19 pandemic has made this year difficult for many people. Indigenous communities where personal and familial connections clearly illustrated how important connectivity truly is in a crisis, notably in remote areas. Without connectivity and with the inability to travel, relationships are being challenged. Youth who are unable to attend online academic and cultural teachings where virtual gatherings are becoming the new norm are losing the ability to maintain their social and mental wellness and safety.

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Well-established providers and their numerous platforms are not available in remote villages. Access to such essential services as online doctors, shopping, education, counseling, news media, social media, delivery services, weather conditions, Covid statistics and “hot spots”, and Covid-19 vaccine, registry, - all imperative services in a state of emergency - are tragically missing.

Since the 1970's, awareness of the UHF Spectrum within our traditional airspace has been known. Many of us remember having to maneuver the television antennas so that our favorite television programs would come in clear. One could say it was a primitive technological era allowing families to connect while watching their favorite shows.

In recent months, Resolution #19 was passed at the Assembly of First Nations. 98.52% of First Nations across Canada voted in favor of requesting 13 bands on the UHF spectrum be released. Karim Lakhani, Chief Executive Officer and President of Advanced Interactive Canada Inc. (DBA Advintive) has been an integral part of bringing this opportunity to fruition for our communities.

Karim Lakhani hails from a small, remote community in East Africa. On a trip back to his home community to reconnect, he realized he needed to bring the world to the students in his homeland, his roots. This connection makes it easy for him to attune himself to the problems we face across Canada in regard to connectivity. Karim's passion is in developing revolutionary new and patentable technologies to close the digital divide for underserved communities across the world through forward-thinking communications, using wireless spectrum frequencies.

Karim has been involved in the design, development, and leadership of emerging technology companies in the areas of data acquisition, multimedia archival and retrieval, interactive training systems, and electronic commerce. He has developed solutions for US Senate and for high profile clients.

Therefore, we are writing you today Minister François-Philippe Champagne to request that you follow the latest decision made whereby U.S. tribes were given priority access to the spectrum, thereby honouring Resolution #19 which reflects the wishes and needs of Canada's Indigenous Peoples, giving Indigenous communities jurisdiction over their airspace, and enabling us to help our communities and better serve our families connection needs.

Minister we are specifically requesting the following policy changes:

- Indigenous communities should have first access to unused spectrum over their land;
- Unused spectrum over Indigenous lands should be licensed for Indigenous use;
- Require telecom companies to subordinate license their unused spectrum over Indigenous lands to the communities for their use.

In unity, Chiefs and Councils

Spuzzum First Nation

/s/ James Hobart

By: Chief James Hobart
Title: Chief Councillor

Gitanyow Band

/s/ Tony Morgan

By: Chief Tony Morgan
Title: Chief Councillor

Nuchatlaht First Nation

/s/ Jordan Michael

By: Chief Jordan Michael
Title: Chief Councillor

Halalt First Nation

/s/ Chief James Thomas

By: Chief James Thomas
Title: Chief Councillor

Gitanmaax Band

/s/ Tracey Woods

By: Chief Tracey Woods
Title: Chief Councillor

Glen Vowell First Nation

/s/ Tony Sampare

By: Chief Tony Sampare
Title: Chief Councillor

Kispiox First Nation

/s/ Cameron Stevens

By: Chief Cameron Stevens
Title: Chief Councillor

Skawahlook First Nation

/s/ Maureen Chapman

By: Chief Maureen Chapman
Title: Chief Councillor

Xaxli'p First Nation

/s/ Colleen Jacob

By: Chief Colleen Jacob
Title: Chief Councillor

O'Chiese First Nation

/s/ Doug Beaverbones

By: Chief Doug Beaverbones
Title: Chief Councillor

Heiltsuk First Nation

/s/ Marilyn Slett

By: Chief Marilyn Slett
Title: Chief Councillor

Douglas First Nation

/s/ Don Harris

By: Chief Don Harris
Title: Chief Councillor

Homalco First Nation

/s/ Darren Blaney

By: Chief Darren Blaney
Title: Chief Councillor

K'ómoks First Nation

/s/ Nicole Rempel

By: Chief Nicole Rempel
Title: Chief Councillor

Doig River First Nation

/s/ Trevor Makadabay

By: Chief Trevor Makadahay
Title: Chief Councillor

Lil'Wat First Nation

/s/ Dean Nelson

By: Chief Dean Nelson
Title: Chief Councillor

Whispering Pines/Clinton First Nation

/s/ Michael LeBourdais

By: Chief Michael LeBourdais
Title: Chief Councillor

Barren Lands First Nation

/s/ Trina Halkett

By: Chief Trina Halkett
Title: Chief Councillor

Brokenhead Ojibway First Nation

/s/ Deborah Smith

By: Chief Deborah Smith
Title: Chief Councillor

Buffalo Point First Nation

/s/ John Thunder

By: Chief John Thunder
Title: Chief Councillor

Fort Alexander / Sagkeeng First Nation

/s/ Derrick Henderson

By: Chief Derrick Henderson
Title: Chief Councillor

Lake Manitoba Treaty 2 First Nation

/s/ Cornell McLean

By: Chief Cornell McLean
Title: Chief Councillor

Long Plain First Nation

/s/ Dennis Meeches

By: Chief Dennis Meeches
Title: Chief Councillor

O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation

/s/ Eugene Eastman

By: Chief Eugene Eastman
Title: Chief Councillor

Sapotaweyak Cree First Nation

/s/ Nelson Genaille

By: Chief Nelson Genaille
Title: Chief Councillor

Sayisi Dene First Nation

/s/ Evan Yassie

By: Chief Evan Yassie
Title: Chief Councillor

Skownan First Nation

/s/ Cameron Catcheway

By: Chief Cameron Catcheway
Title: Chief Councillor

Swan Lake First Nation

/s/ Francine Meeches

By: Chief Francine Meeches
Title: Chief Councillor

Skwah First Nation

/s/ Lara Mussell

By: Chief Lara Mussell
Title: Chief Councillor

Shxw'ow'hamel First Nation

/s/ Rhoda Peters

By: Chief Rhoda Peters
Title: Chief Councillor

Sumas First Nation

/s/ Dalton Silver

By: Chief Dalton Silver
Title: Chief Councillor

Nak'azdli Whut'en' First Nation

/s/ Aileen Prince

By: Chief Aileen Prince
Title: Chief Councillor

Skowkale First Nation

/s/ Mark Point

By: Chief Mark Point
Title: Chief Councillor

Tsartlip First Nation

/s/ Don Tom

By: Chief Don Tom
Title: Chief Councillor

Samson Cree First Nation

/s/ Vernon Saddleback

By: Chief Vernon Saddleback
Title: Chief Councillor

Yale First First Nation

/s/ Ken Hansen

By: Chief Ken Hansen
Title: Chief Councillor

Kwikwetlem First Nation

/s/ Ed Hall

By: Chief Ed Hall

Title: Chief Councillor

Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation

/s/ Hillary Adam

By: Chief Hillary Adam

Title: Chief Councillor

Nadleh Whut'en First Nation

/s/ Larry Nooski

By: Chief Larry Nooski

Title: Chief Councillor

Tzeachten First Nation

/s/ Derek Epp

By: Chief Derek Epp

Title: Chief Councillor

Mosquito, Grizzly Bear's Head, Lean Man First Nations

/s/ Tanya Aguilar-Antiman

By: Chief Tanya Aguilar-Antiman

Title: Chief Councillor

Pinaymootang First Nation

/s/ Garnet Woodhouse

By: Chief Garnet Woodhouse

Title: Chief Councillor

Saulteaux First Nation

/s/ Kenny Moccasin

By: Chief Kenny Moccasin

Title: Chief Councillor

Moosomin First Nation

/s/ Brad Swiftwolfe

By: Chief Brad Swiftwolfe

Title: Chief Councillor

Northlands Denesuline First Nation

/s/ Simon Denechezhe

By: Chief Simon Denechezhe
Title: Chief Councillor

Rainy River First Nations

/s/ Robin McGinnis

By: Chief Robin McGinnis
Title: Chief Councillor

Saddle Lake Cree First Nation

/s/ Eric Shirt

By: Chief Eric Shirt
Title: Chief Councillor

Red Pheasant Cree First Nation

/s/ Clint Wuttunee

By: Chief Clint Wuttunee
Title: Chief Councillor

Esdilagh First Nation

/s/ Troy Baptiste

By: Chief Troy Baptiste
Title: Chief Councillor

Mamalilikulla-Qwe'Qwa'Sot'Em First Nation

/s/ John L. Powell

By: Chief John L. Powell
Title: Chief Councillor

Squiale First Nation

/s/ David Jimmie

By: Chief David Jimmie
Title: Chief Councillor

Neskonlith First Nation

/s/ Judy Wilson

By: Chief Judy Wilson
Title: Chief Councillor

Kanaka Bar First Nation

/s/ Patrick Michell

By: Chief Patrick Michell
Title: Chief Councillor

Boston Bar First Nation

/s/ Pam Robertson

By: Chief Pam Robertson
Title: Chief Councillor

Cheam First Nation

/s/ Andrew Victor

By: Chief Andrew Victor
Title: Chief Councillor

Matsqui First Nation

/s/ Alice McKay

By: Chief Alice McKay
Title: Chief Councillor

Iskut First Nation

/s/ Marie Quock

By: Chief Marie Quock
Title: Chief Councillor

Cape Mudge Band

/s/ Ronnie Chickite

By: Chief Ronnie Chickite
Title: Chief Councillor

Skidegate First Nation

/s/ Billy Yovanovich

By: Chief Billy Yovanovich
Title: Chief Councillor

Liard First Nation

/s/ Stephen Charlie

By: Chief Stephen Charlie
Title: Chief Councillor

Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte First Nation

/s/ Stephen Charlie

By: Chief Rodrick Maracle
Title: Chief Councillor

Chief Hanamuxw, (Don Ryan)

Please, see attached file "Spectrum Minister Letter-Hanamuxw.pdf"

Chiefs of Ontario

Please, see attached file "BN - First Nation Priority to UHF Spectrum (9.17.21).pdf"

Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement

/s/ Stan Delorme

By: Stan Delorme
Title: Chairman

Elizabeth Métis Settlement

/s/ Raymond Desjarlais

By: Raymond Desjarlais
Title: Vice-Chair