



Déljné Got'jné Government

Our People. Our Future. Our Déljné.



May 3, 2018

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.,
Prime Minister of Canada, Ottawa
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2
Delivered via email: pm@pm.gc.ca

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

The Déljné Got'jné Government wishes to express its concerns regarding the measures that the Governments has taken in consulting with communities surrounding the imminent legalization of *cannabis* throughout Canada and, more specifically, the lack of acknowledgement of and appreciation for the position that Déljné holds as an **Indigenous Self-Government**.

It is of utmost importance that the Federal Government be made aware that we are a **self-governing body** and should not simply be invited to partake in consultation procedures that the either the Federal or Territorial Governments pursue with other communities. The consultations that were conducted throughout the Northwest Territories over the course of the last seven months have not followed the proper protocol that one governing body might expect from another. Prior to visitation in Déljné by the Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly on April 25, 2018, no leaders or government officials of the Déljné *Got'jné* (Peoples) were consulted. Formal discussions and collaborations on the upcoming *cannabis* legislation did *not* take place between the Déljné Got'jné Government (DGG) and the Territorial Government, nor between the DGG and the Federal Government. Not only were our governing officials not invited to be involved directly in consultations, but they were also not invited to join the Standing Committee during its visit on April 25th for the community information session. We must reiterate that this subordinate treatment of our government is exactly what the evolutionary process of self-governance has strived to eliminate.

In addition, Federal and Territorial Legislation of *cannabis* should not apply to the Self-Governing community of Déljné as it does for other non-self-governing communities. This legislation is an issue that the DGG should have jurisdiction over, just as it does with the laws surrounding alcohol. As a self-government, the DGG must establish its own legislation surrounding the parameters of the legalization of *cannabis*. Our Elders have



Déljné Got'jné Government

Our People. Our Future. Our Déljné.



prophesied for many years regarding community effects of *cannabis* usage and we cannot simply remain passive on this subject, allowing others to have jurisdiction over what is rightfully our own ruling to create and implement.

In conclusion, as we are in the midst of an electoral process and will be soon implementing a new government, our ʔEkw'ahtjǰá and K'aowadó kə wish to instill a *moratorium on cannabis* possession and/or consumption in the community of Déljné until this new government has been elected, set in place, and had proper time to determine the needs and desires of the Déljné Got'jné with respect to the issue of *cannabis*. This coincides with the recent recommendation from the Members of the Senate's Aboriginal Peoples Committee that the date for the Federal Government's legalization of marijuana be pushed to the following year so as to take the time "to address the drug's potential for harmful effects in Indigenous communities across Canada" (Tasker, 2018). We do not feel that we have had sufficient time to properly explore the teachings of our ancestors; consult with our community members; and fully grasp the repercussions that the legalization of *cannabis* may have on our community. With respect to repercussions, the issue of the fragility of youth must be at the forefront of our exploration into the potentially damaging nature of the presence of *cannabis* in our community. It is with this in mind that we wish to delay the legalization of this substance.

Finally, once again, it is imperative that the legislation and jurisdiction of *cannabis* be in the hands of the Déljné Got'jné Government so as to foster the leadership that we have developed through our self-governance while simultaneously considering our own People's needs, concerns and values and implementing the subsequent appropriate measures throughout the community of Déljné.

Sincere Regards,

RAYMOND TUTCHO

ʔEKW'AHTJǰÁ

Déljné Got'jné Government

CC: Honourable Bob McLeod, Premier of the Northwest Territories
Honourable Caroline Bennett, Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs
Honourable Jane Philpott, Minister of Indigenous Services
Michael McLeod, M.P. for the Northwest Territories



**Déline Got'ine
Government**

Our People. Our Future. Our Déline.



Shane Thompson, Chair, Standing Committee on Social Development,
Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories
Daniel McNeely, MLA for the Sahtu Constituency of the Northwest Territories



**Déligne Got'ine
Government**

Our People. Our Future. Our Déligne.



WORKS CITED

Tasker, J. P. (2018, May 1). Senators recommend delaying cannabis bill for a year to address Indigenous issues. *CBC News*. Retrieved from, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/senate-cannabis-legislation-indigenous-1.4643590>. May 3, 2018.