



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Removal of sex-based discrimination from the Indian Act: descendants of First Nations women entitled to registration**

*Dr. Sharon McIvor launched her case to challenge sex-based discrimination in the Indian Act in 1989*

**B.C.** — August 20, 2019 — The BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) celebrates BCAAFC President, Dr. Sharon McIvor, for her dedication to removing sex-based discrimination from the Indian Act. On August 15, 2019, the Government of Canada removed the 1951 cut-off from the Indian Act, ensuring women would have the same rights as men in the Act's registration provisions. This change was the result of decades of litigation.

Dr. McIvor launched her case to challenge sex-discrimination in the Indian Act in 1989. She won a landmark case in the B.C. Court of Appeal in 2009. The win led to Bill C-3 the following year, which restored Indian status to grandchildren of women who lost their status for marrying a non-status man. While Bill C-3 restored Indian status to many, the 1951 cut-off denied status to the grandchildren of Indigenous women if the grandchild was born before September 4, 1951. No such exclusion existed for the grandchildren of Indigenous men.

Dr. McIvor and her son, Jacob Grismer, addressed the Act's remaining discrimination with a petition to the United Nations Human Rights Committee in 2010. They sought confirmation of the entitlement of female status Indians to hold and transmit equal registration status to their descendants, without discrimination based on sex. This case initiated the removal of the 1951 cut-off, resulting in the elimination of sex-based discrimination from the Act.

The Government of Canada reported that independent demographic estimates predict 270,000 to 450,000 individuals could be newly entitled to registration under the Indian Act within the next 10 years.

If you believe you are entitled to registration, visit [canada.ca/indian-status](http://canada.ca/indian-status) for more information.

**About the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres**

The BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) is the umbrella organization for the 25 Friendship Centres located throughout the province of B.C. Mandated to improve the quality of life for Indigenous peoples, Friendship Centres deliver culturally-relevant programs and services to Indigenous people living off-reserve. B.C. Friendship Centres are part of a national network. For more information, visit [bcaafc.com](http://bcaafc.com).

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