



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Xat'sull First Nation strongly opposes Canada's Bill C-5 and calls on Canada to uphold its commitment to UNDRIP**

*Kukpi7 (Chief) Rhonda Phillips sounds the alarm that Bill C-5 is a step backwards on reconciliation and nothing short of colonialism rebranded*

**XAT'SULL FIRST NATION TERRITORY, B.C.; 20 June 2025:** Xat'sull First Nation is voicing strong opposition to Canada's Bill C-5, which would enact the *Free Trade and Labour Mobility in Canada Act and the Building Canada Act*. If passed, this legislation will give the Government of Canada the power to bypass environmental assessments and public oversight in the approval of major projects, which includes mines, pipelines, and ports.

"Bill C-5 is deeply troubling and sets a dangerous precedent," said Kukpi7 (Chief) Rhonda Phillips, Xat'sull First Nation. "Environmental assessments are not red tape — they are safeguards for our lands, waters, and future generations. Bypassing these protections for short-term economic gain directly threatens Indigenous rights, ecosystems, and sacred sites."

Xat'sull asserts that major projects cannot happen without the direct involvement of First Nations rights holders and that Chiefs must be at the table when decisions like this are made.

First Nations across Canada are already facing increased government overreach, and Bill C-5 is yet another example of Canada ignoring its constitutional and moral obligations to Indigenous Peoples. First Nations demand a seat at the table and call on the Government of Canada to fully respect and uphold the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, and First Nations' Inherent Rights.

"The federal government must be held accountable," said Kukpi7 Phillips. "The government cannot continue to go rogue and make unilateral decisions that impact our territories, our people, and our laws."

Bill C-5 is no different than recent legislation in British Columbia, namely Bill 14 and Bill 15, which also undermine Indigenous governance and jurisdiction. Xat'sull joined First Nations, Indigenous organizations, municipal governments, provincial opposition parties, environmental advocacy organizations and business groups throughout B.C. calling for these laws to be repealed.



In his recent [Speech from the Throne](#), King Charles III stated that a new Major federal Project Office would speed up approvals from five years to two, “all while upholding Canada's world-leading environmental standards and its constitutional obligations to Indigenous Peoples.” If Canada is serious about that promise, it must not move forward with Bill C-5.

By proceeding with this legislation and steamrolling Indigenous rights, Canada will find itself tied up in court with lawsuit after lawsuit — resulting in high and unnecessary costs to taxpayers and delayed major projects.

“Bill C-5 is not reconciliation — it’s colonialism rebranded,” said Kukpi7 Phillips. “We cannot allow this country to take steps backward when it comes to Indigenous rights and environmental protection. Our Nations are watching. Our lands are not for sale. And our voices will not be silenced.”

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Xatsúll First Nation is a First Nations government and is part of the larger Secwepemc (Shuswap) Nation, located in the Cariboo region of British Columbia near Williams Lake. Learn more on Xatsúll First Nation’s [website](#).

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