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WJOLEELP rejects unilaterally developed Bill 15, Infrastructure Projects Act, 2025

For Immediate Release

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WJOLEELP (Tsartlip First Nation)—WJOLEELP Leadership is demanding the Government of British Columbia immediately withdraw the proposed Bill 15, Infrastructure Projects Act, 2025.

The bill, if passed later this month, gives Cabinet the power to override consultation with First Nations, environmental protections, and due process, all under the pretense of efficiency and expediency.

Bill 15 is not about streamlining. It is about centralizing control in the Premier's Office, sidestepping legal requirements, and removing regulatory safeguards, that protect our lands and waters.

The bill sidelines constitutionally protected Aboriginal rights and title and the Crown's duty to consult First Nations. It has no requirement to meet the human rights standards in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and it guts the Environmental Assessment Act.

David Eby's BC NDP government has claimed reconciliation as their crowning achievement, yet they push this bill forward despite no consultation with First Nations. This is not how a government committed to reconciliation behaves.

With this power grab, Premier Eby is acting like he has the overwhelming majority that he inherited. WJOLEELP reminds Mr. Eby that he currently has only one seat majority, and that he as a leader was barely able to get his team across the line in the provincial election last Fall.

WJOLEELP calls on the three members of the BC NDP Caucus—Tamara Davidson, Joan Phillip, and Deb Toporowski—to courageously defend the rights of First Nations in British Columbia by voting against Bill 15. We have collectively experienced the deep damage done by colonial decision-making in our communities, and each of you holds a seat in a government that is preparing to repeat the same harm—this time through legislation cloaked in red tape reduction. **This is the time to set aside your partisan interests and stand with your relatives. We stand with you; this is the moment we need you to choose to stand with us!**

To the Chiefs and leadership of every Nation in British Columbia. We invite you to stand with us and speak out now.

Bill 15 will affect all of us—our legal rights, the health of our territories, the future of consultation in this province. If passed, this bill sets a precedent for governing without our involvement, it diminishes the Declaration Act in practice, even while it invokes it.

Let us stand united. Let our voices be clear. Reconciliation must include our consent, the protection of our human rights, and it must uphold our constitutionally protected Aboriginal title and rights.

We do not consent to Bill 15, and we will not stand by while our rights are steamrolled in the name of efficiency.

- 30 -

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Don Tom', with a stylized, cursive script.

Chief Don Tom

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