

## Seniors For Climate Action Now! (SCAN!)

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Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford,

### Re: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

We are writing to express our concern with your government's decision not to designate National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30th as a provincial statutory holiday.

Our organization, Seniors for Climate Action Now! (SCAN!) is made up of seniors compelled to urgent climate action. We recognize the indigenous peoples' central role in addressing the climate emergency as an essential feature of a just reconciliation.

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is meant to be an important step in that path toward reconciliation. Call to Action #80 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report asked that Ottawa establish a day to *"honour [residential school] survivors, their families and communities, and ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process."*

That Call to Action has been taken up by the federal government.

Many other governments have followed suit. For example, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador have declared provincial statutory holidays. (Private businesses can choose to be open or closed.) British Columbia has advised provincial public-sector employers to honour the day; and most schools, post-secondary institutions and some health sector workplaces and Crown corporations will be closed in that province. In Manitoba, the government is formally recognizing the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation as a day of observance to encourage reflection and meaningful discussions about the impacts of residential schools.

A number of municipalities like the Region of Peel have formally recognized the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and are closing offices and operating services on holiday schedules on September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Earlier this year on the news of the discovery of a burial site containing the remains of 215 Indigenous children at the former Indian Residential School in Kamloops, British Columbia you said:

*"As we advance meaningful reconciliation, it is important that all of us continue to deepen our collective understanding of the legacy of the Indian Residential School system."*

In our view, appropriate recognition of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation would be consistent with your statement.

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We would be remiss if we did not request that your government also address another important recommendation from The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Call to Action 43).

That recommendation calls on Provincial Governments to adopt and implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples so that that the laws of Ontario are consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

UNDRIP establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the Indigenous Peoples and affirms Indigenous Peoples' rights to protection of the environment. SCAN! strongly supports this Call to Action

We appreciate your attention to our request and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

SCAN! co-chairs



Lyba Spring



Nick De Carlo