

Good morning everyone;

My name is James Campbell and I am the Director of Parliamentary Affairs who works with Senator McCallum in Ottawa.

I would like start by recognizing that we are gathered on the original lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and also on the homeland of the Metis Nation.

I extend my deep thanks to Kelly, Ramona, and everyone whose tireless efforts and hard work made this conference possible. It has been an extremely valuable and enlightening experience for me so far. On that note, I would also like to thank all those here today and those who have been in attendance throughout the conference. I have had the chance to hear many of your insights and teachings and I can assure you they will be invaluable to us as we continue to fight to protect our lands and resources from further devastation at the hands of industry and government policy. I remain humbled to be gathered with such passionate trouble makers.

Now, I first feel that it is important to explain how our interest and involvement in this issue came about. As part of her duties in the Senate, Senator McCallum serves as a member of the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources. For the better part of the past year, this Committee had been studying a Bill known as the Impact Assessment Act. This Bill enables many transformative changes to how future resource development projects proceed. Specifically, the Bill aimed to ensure that only responsible projects with a responsible plan of action would be able to proceed. Additionally, the Bill further enshrined into law the onus of both companies and the Crown to adequately consult with impacted and surrounding Indigenous groups to ensure their views, knowledge, and insights are incorporated into the planning and execution of these projects.

This Bill, which has since passed and become law within Canada, aimed to effect positive change and environmental protections. However, a major concern that we had throughout the process was how loudly Industry was heard during consultations on this Bill compared to how muted the voice was in support of the environment. Since its introduction in Parliament, this Bill had – and still continues - to cause an uproar and great division within Canada, largely along regional lines. This is due to the fact that many who are pro-industry are located within the heart of the prairies, where the oil sands and many other development projects are located.

It has recently come to light that 80% of all lobbyists in the Senate on this Bill represented Industry. On the other hand, only 13% represented environmental groups and only 4% represented Indigenous interests. Although Senator McCallum had fought to have greater equity and balance in who we heard from during these testimonies, those attempts within the Senate were fruitless.

While the Senator has always been aware of the impacts of resource extraction and development due to her many years working in rural and northern communities here in Manitoba, the picture became much more clear and much more bleak during the study of this Bill.

In the hopes of giving credence to what we had heard during this study, we had put forward a number of amendments that looked to support what we had heard from those whose voices had been minimized during this discussion. Specifically, Senator McCallum put forward a number of amendments to the Bill, which included:

- A non-abrogation or derogation clause that reaffirms both the duty to consult as well as Indigenous Rights as granted by Section 35 of the Constitution.
- An amendment that would give special recognition to the impact that various aspects of resource extraction and development have on women, especially Indigenous women.
- An amendment to ensure that the decision-making mechanisms in this Bill would take into consideration the Canadian Government's personal commitment to implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- An amendment that would give the assurance that there would be a just transition to a low-carbon economy, where good and decent jobs would be created during this transition, especially for Indigenous Peoples.
- An amendment that indicated that Indigenous knowledge, especially that of Indigenous women, be considered at least equal to scientific knowledge during the impact assessment of future projects.
- An amendment that requires a gender-based analysis to be undertaken on the effects of the policies, plans, programs, or issues being assessed.

And, finally

- An amendment that agreements or arrangements which were previously made between Indigenous Governments and the Federal Government be respected when it comes to resource sharing and related oversights.

As you can see, in short, we fought to give voice to both the environment and Indigenous Peoples. While, unfortunately, not all of these amendments passed into law, an important first step was taken where these ideas and notions were put forward on the floor of the Senate for debate and discussion. It may not be everything, but it is an important step in making this subject matter – which is uncomfortable for many of the other Senators – both familiar and comfortable moving forward. As we have heard before: it is time for the Government to get comfortable with being uncomfortable.

Now, once this legislation had passed into law, we found it impossible to move on and simply forget the stories of those we heard from who have literally been devastated by resource extraction and development. Many of those people sit in this room today. Knowing we had to do more, Senator McCallum wrote a letter this past spring to the Office of the Auditor General here in Canada. Through this letter, we had requested a Special Investigation be undertaken by the Auditor General's Office to examine the cumulative negative impacts of resource extraction and development within Canada.

We were well aware that this request, and its subject matter, were extremely ambitious. As I have said, many here are far too familiar with the breadth and scope that resource extraction and development has on surrounding communities. Without getting into the nitty gritty, there are issues of land/water/and air degradation; there are health concerns from the toxins that inevitably make their way into our ecosystems; there are sustenance concerns as the surrounding flora and fauna are either killed off or are forced to relocate; there are safety concerns due to an influx of workers and the creation of man camps. These man camps tend to bring with them a toxic masculinity that results in violence, sexual assault, prostitution, sex trafficking, alcohol and drug addiction, and blatant racism and sexism of both the workers and company policies.

On a personal note, I have recently had the opportunity to see all of these issues first hand. Last month, the community of Fox Lake here in Manitoba welcomed the Senator and I into their territory and on to their land to see the devastation – both to the people as well as the land and its resources. The devastation has been wrought

by their four hydro dams. Kettle, Long Spruce, and Limestone dams were built in the 60s and 70s. The infamous Keeyask damn started construction a decade ago and is still a work in progress. These dams resulted in the flooding of traditional lands and burial sites. Many traplines have either been levelled or flooded out. Animals like moose and caribou which were once in abundance are no nowhere to be seen, scared away decades ago from all of the blasting and yet to return. These dams even completely reversed the flow of a river. I don't think I want to know what ungodly actions need to be taken to forcefully overpower Mother Nature in that way. And if any think, well, there might be an economic benefit that comes from that, I can tell you the answer is a resounding "no." Instead, Fox Lake, a community devastated so that Hydro can be produced, pays an average of \$800 a month for Hydro during the winter.

While I was humbled to have had the opportunity to hear the story of Fox Lake and see firsthand what they are dealing with, it has further ignited our passion and resolve to right these wrongs and ensure that these injustices do not continue.

However, we recognized that we needed the help of outside entities to fight this battle, as most of these issues are cross-jurisdictional between the Federal and Provincial governments. If we were to continue down this path alone, we could – at best – only achieve half of the work required as we would be unable to get into the meat of the issues that fall under provincial jurisdiction.

We were able to meet with the Auditor General's people last week where we learned that they face similar constraints, only being able to review federal policies and programs. As such, the next step we have ahead of us on our path is to contact the Provincial Auditors General to seek their assistance and compliance in working with their Federal counterparts on this investigation. It has been done before and we will work to ensure it happens here again. These Provincial entities have the ability to review their province's environmental policies and procedures to ensure they are complying with their intended purpose. It is our goal that, with these two bodies working together, we will be able to have a complete review on the cumulative adverse impacts of resource extraction across Canada.

The goal is, once we are armed with this information, we will be able to see what gaps exist in current policies, and which policies are inadequate and thus are failing our communities. With this vital information, we will be better prepared to target these shortcomings and inequities and fill these gaps to ensure our citizens, our land, our water, and our air remains protected and healthy.

One more point I would like to expand upon and which I had mentioned briefly is the profound impact that resource extraction and development has on women, especially Indigenous women. Not only are they more likely to face discrimination and sexual violence, they are least likely to benefit from any potential opportunities that may arise in these development projects. This much has become overly clear to us. As such, we are intending to put forward a Bill in the Senate which would give greater consideration to the impact on women of **all** future legislation as well as advance women's rights here in Canada.

Through this Bill, we would call on the laws of Canada to be in harmony with the principles set out in the *Beijing Declaration*, which is a UN document that moves the agenda forward on gender equality. This Bill would, in short, advance the empowerment of women as equal decision-makers and agents of change in economic, social and political processes, and focus on achieving equitable and sustainable progress, improving women's status, and respecting women's rights and contributions.

I will leave this notion of women's issues and gender based analysis to my colleague, Anna Millest, who will discuss this more in depth.

I would like to leave off with two final thoughts. The first is to draw from a notion put forward by Dr. Derek Kornelsen in a breakout session yesterday afternoon. Dr. Kornelsen's presentation was entitled "Learning to learn from Indigenous Resurgence." This was something that resonated with me. I am not, and will never, stand before you to tell you what is best. Instead, I stand before you all with the intent to learn from you, to take what we have heard, and to bring your voices to the floor of Parliament. Our intent is not to fight for you, our intent is to make space for you to be able to fight for yourselves.

Finally, I would like to agree with a point Dr. Joshi raised yesterday morning. She had said this is a David and Goliath-type battle. I agree. However, it is gatherings like this that bring a lot of little Davids together and when that happens, Hydro better be careful. One David beat Goliath. A band of Davids united can change the world. Wa Ni Ska Tan – let it be said that I am prepared to rise up with you.

Thank you all again for your time and contributions this weekend, it has been transformative for me. I will now pass it over to my colleague Anna.