



UNION OF BC INDIAN CHIEFS

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

News Release

June 12, 2025

UBCIC Chiefs Council Unanimously Passes Resolution Opposing Federal Fast-Track Legislation

(xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliwətał (Tsleil Waututh)/ Vancouver, B.C. – June 12, 2025) The Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) has unanimously passed a resolution opposing the recently introduced federal fast-tracking 'One Canadian Economy' Bill C-5 which would fast-track large-scale infrastructure and resource projects by allowing federal ministers to bypass environmental reviews, provincial collaboration, and the obligation to obtain First Nations' free, prior, and informed consent.

[UBCIC Resolution 2025-24](#) "Opposition to Bill C-5, *An Act to enact the Free Trade and Labour Mobility in Canada Act and the Building Canada Act, and Call for Coordinated First Nations Response*" was passed unanimously at the UBCIC Chiefs Council meeting on June 11, 2025, and warns that the proposed legislation is in complete opposition to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration) and Canada's own *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UNDA).

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, UBCIC President, stated "The federal government cannot cloak violations of our rights under the guise of national interest. This legislation, as currently written, would be a complete betrayal of Canada's commitments under the UN Declaration and the hard-fought recognition of our inherent and constitutionally protected title and rights. It will not stand unopposed. Previous major projects rammed through in the so-called national interest have typically faced major cost overruns that were borne by the taxpayer, such as the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion, which was originally estimated at \$5.4 billion and came in with a final price tag of a whopping \$34 billion. We need projects that are properly considered and that uphold our title and rights – Bill C-5 doesn't lead to this."

The proposed legislation seeks to enable ministers to deem projects "in the national interest," granting near-automatic approval and overriding vital regulatory and consultative processes. UBCIC argues that this legislative maneuver undermines environmental protections, First Nations basic human rights and sovereignty, and the principles of justice and equity affirmed in international and Canadian law.

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“Bill C-5 is a dangerous step backwards in democracy,” stated Chief Don Tom, UBCIC Vice-President. “The Bill was introduced without any meaningful consultation and cooperation with title and rights holders- Canada provided a letter and background document to the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations a week prior to introduction, and we are not aware that this went to all First Nations. UBCIC did not receive a copy from Canada. The federal government is attempting to push through projects without our consent, without our participation, and without regard for our laws or the lands we are stewards of. We reject this outright and will work in unity with other First Nations and organizations to ensure our rights are upheld.”

Chief Marilyn Slett, UBCIC Secretary-Treasurer, concluded “It is clear to us that provincial and federal politicians are advancing a coordinated agenda designed to sidestep and undermine the basic human rights of First Nations. The government of BC’s *Infrastructure Projects Act* and *Renewable Energy Projects (Streamlined Permitting) Act*, the government of Ontario’s Bill 5, *Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act*, and now the federal government’s Bill C-5. We will not allow Crown governments to sidestep their legal obligations or erase decades of progress through legislative shortcuts. We stand with all First Nations, including those in Ontario, who oppose this regressive legislation. Our resistance will be strategic and united.”

UBCIC is calling for the immediate withdrawal of Bill C-5 and demands any future legislation impacting First Nations title and rights be developed in full consultation and cooperation with First Nations as required by UNDA, with adequate federal resources for true First Nations-led engagement.

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UBCIC is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

For more information, please visit www.ubcic.bc.ca

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