

Status of Women Committee – House of Commons
Written Brief for Study on Resource Development and Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls

Submitted by: Deborah Green – nee Gopher

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kâkike manitohkân iskwew – ‘Forever Spirit Woman’

MMEIP Family Member, and Indigenous Workforce Development Advisor for Energy Industry

Introduction:

I am a proud Nehiyaw Iskwew from Treaty 4, Piapot First Nation. I walk in both worlds as a proud Cree woman while driving change and reconciliation in predominantly white corporations and organizations. *The views and opinions expressed in this brief are my personal views/opinions and not representative of the organization I am employed by.* (See Professional Bio – attached in email).

MMEIP Family Story:

My sister, Eleanor Theresa (Laney) Ewenin was murdered by a Starlight Tour in Calgary, AB in 1982 and her murder was covered up by the Calgary Police Service. It was never investigated, solved to this current day. My family and I advocate for MMEIP families and survivors and sit on various committees and plan events/education awareness provincially and federally in organizations, non-profit's and community. (See MMIWG2S+ Bio – attached in email).

Relevant Career History in Energy Industry:

My life's work has been to create a safer, non-biased, and non-discriminatory path for the future Indigenous generations. I have worked in the energy/oil and gas industry for 20 years. (See bio.) My work includes bringing education and awareness of colonization, current issues, including the marginalization of Indigenous Peoples in Canada including MMEIP. I work closely with Indigenous and Community Relations in my company to advise/contribute to actions in regards to the Calls to Justice 13 of the National Inquiry.

Calls to Justice 13:

Summarizing the Calls to Justice 13 specific to industry is work that I participate in at my organization through leading the Indigenous employee network. We recently delivered a MMEIP session and the Calls to Justice 13:

- ✓ Ensure safety & security
- ✓ Complete socio-economic impacts on projects
- ✓ Include provisions on impact-benefit agreements
- ✓ Participate in further inquiries & studies
- ✓ Mitigation measures for impact to social infrastructure

My company is in early stages of action, however we have been providing supporting actions that include:

- Raising Indigenous awareness through Indigenous history training
- Safety workshops
- Reviewing impact assessments
- Working with industry partners
- Considerations for Industry agreements with Indigenous communities, and projects
- Funding priorities

My recommendations for government and energy industry:

Given my unique knowledge, expertise, advocacy work and experiences in the MMEIP space and my lived experience as a family member, allows me the opportunity to also express my personal recommendations and the Calls to Justice relevant to Government 13.2, 13.3, 13.4, 13.5:

- Complete gender-based socio-economic impact assessment – outline expectations and accountabilities for organizations to mitigate and be pro-active in planning projects for the safety of Indigenous Peoples
- Equitably allocate funding for further studies and actions including organizational groups, and grassroots groups and people to follow through on actions by industry
- Provide funding and support for social health groups to support areas where industry projects are approved including federal/provincial funding for social services, mental health, healing groups, targeted and specific justice and policing groups which are Indigenous led.
- Engage MMEIP families and survivors directly for government recommendations vs organizations to ensure government is responding to the unique and lived experiences of the families.
- Refer to the “Indigenous Communities and Industrial Camps” Report prepared by the Firelight Group, February 2017
- Expand terminology to Missing, Murdered, Exploited Indigenous Peoples (MMEIP) to be inclusive of men, boys, women, girls and 2-Spirit and other LGBTQS+