



IROQUOIS CAUCUS

UP-DATE – BORDER CROSSING WORKGROUP OCTOBER 16th, 2007

The Elected Councils of the seven Iroquois communities of Kanehsatá:ke, Kahnawà:ke, Akwesásne, Six Nations of the Grand River, Oneida of the Thames, Tyendinaga and Wahta have been meeting as an Iroquois Caucus for the past three years. They have joined together to develop harmonious relations, mutual respect and sharing. The Elected Councils of the Iroquois Caucus signed a Declaration of Principles at the Annual Border Crossing Celebration in Niagara Falls on July 21st, 2007.

We have agreed to promote and protect the Iroquois languages, culture and autonomy, while respecting and recognizing the unique responsibilities, authority and jurisdiction inherent within each respective community.

One of the important issues that the Iroquois Caucus is jointly working on is the production of Identification Cards that can be used for crossing the U.S./Canada border. In this regard, the Iroquois Caucus has formed a Border Crossing Working Group with representatives from each community.

As of **January 23rd, 2007**, a Canadian or American Passport is required if you are **flying** from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda into the United States. The only other documentation that will be accepted is: US Permanent Resident Card, asylee or refugee document, Merchant Mariner's Document or NEXUS Air Card. You do not need a Passport if you are flying from point to point within the United States (example – from Buffalo to Florida).

As early as the summer of 2008, all persons traveling into the U.S. from Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, the Caribbean and Bermuda **by LAND OR SEA, may be required** to present a Passport or other documents as determined by the Department of Homeland Security. While recent legislative changes permit a later deadline, the Department of State and Homeland Security are working to meet all requirements as soon as possible. Ample advance notice will be provided to enable the public to obtain Passports or Passport Cards for land and sea entries.

The Iroquois Caucus Border Crossing Working Group is working on a date in October to meet with the Department of Homeland Security to present an ID Card for our members, which will be acceptable for crossing the border. The Iroquois Caucus has identified a card manufacturer who will be making the presentation of the card to the Department of Homeland Security.

The Iroquois Caucus Working Group has already met with Canadian Government officials and has relayed our concerns to them. They have informed us that they have set up a Task Force, headed by

the Minister of Public Security, Stockwell Day, which is hearing all concerns and forwarding them to the U.S. Government. The Working Group will be seeking a further meeting with the Task Force.

The Iroquois Caucus Working Group had hoped to work with the Haudenosaunee Documentation Committee that has been established for the same purpose. To date, this has not happened and both Working Groups are doing their own work. This does not mean, however, that at some point in the future, we could not join forces to jointly work on one ID Card.

The Department of Indian Affairs is also working on a revised Certificate of Indian Status Card, which they hope will meet the border requirements. There are other groups who are also working on ID Cards. (For example: The Assembly of First Nations, the Province of Ontario – Ontario Drivers Licenses).

The U.S. Government issued their Proposed Rule, with respect to Land and Sea crossings in June 2007. The Iroquois Caucus has presented their input on the Proposed Rule. Submissions can be found on the following website: www.regulations.gov

The Iroquois Caucus Border Crossing Working Group will continue to work on this important issue over the next months with the hope of having a satisfactory conclusion prior to January 1st, 2008.

If you have any questions or require more information, contact can be made with the following members of the Iroquois Caucus Border Crossing Working Group:

Six Nations of the Grand River:

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Jan Burning
Director of Lands and Membership
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Oneida Nation of the Thames:

Councilor Chris George
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Councilor Clint Cornelius
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Mohawk Council of Akwesasne:

Chief Cheryl Jacobs
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Chief Wes Benedict
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Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke:

Chief Mike Bush – 450-632-7500
Chief Martin Leborgne –514-409-5483

Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory:

Councilor Roy Maracle
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Councilor Blaine Loft
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Kanehsatá:ke Mohawk Territory:

Grand Chief Stephen Bonspille
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Wahta Mohawk Territory:

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