



September 16, 2021

The Hon. Doug Ford, MPP
Premier of Ontario
premier@ontario.ca
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto Ontario M7A 1A1

Dear Premier,

Six Nations of the Grand River is most disappointed that the Government of Ontario has decided not to observe National Truth and Reconciliation Day by marking September 30th as a statutory holiday. While you and many other provincial officials have expressed your commitment to strengthening relationships with First Nations communities, this upcoming statutory holiday is an important symbol indicating a commitment to practical action.

This year has been difficult on everyone, but particularly so for the Indigenous communities whose old wounds were reopened upon the discovery of their lost children's remains. Canada's history has been marred by the dark legacy of governmental theft of children. Forcefully removing children from their parents and communities to assimilate them to the Government's culture and values was and remains an abominable crime. It is not enough that leaders give a few remarks on occasion, only to let pass more formal opportunities to officially acknowledge where we've come from and where we need to go.

We are glad that, with the recent passage of Bill C-5, Parliament has set this date as an annual statutory holiday for federally-regulated employees to acknowledge the history of the Indian Residential School system and to honour the children taken, their families, and their communities. This was a positive response on the part of federal authorities to Call to Action number 80 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Now it is time for Ontario to join British Columbia and the Northwest Territories, and to lead other provinces, in full, official commemoration of this day.

Yours truly,

Chief Mark B. Hill
Six Nations of the Grand River

cc: The Six Nations of the Grand River community