



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

High Court affirms Métis jurisdictional rights over child and family services

February 9, 2024 – Métis Nation–Saskatchewan (MN–S) applauds today’s decision from the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC), affirming the jurisdiction of Indigenous governments to create and administer their own child and family services. This is a crucial step in advancing and protecting the wellbeing of Métis children and youth.

“This is a great day for our Métis Nation in Saskatchewan,” said MN–S President Glen McCallum. “Today’s monumental decision by the Supreme Court is a confirmation of the work our Métis government has been doing for citizens in protecting and strengthening our families to preserve Métis identity, culture, values and language for future generations. We continue to affirm our inherent right to self-government and work towards its implementation.”

The country’s highest court addressed Quebec’s Constitutional challenge of Bill C-92 by stating:

“The pith and substance of the Act, taken in its entirety, is to protect the well-being of Indigenous children, youth and families by promoting the delivery of culturally appropriate child and family services and, in so doing, to advance the process of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. This important legislative initiative falls squarely within Parliament’s legislative jurisdiction under s. 91(24) of the *Constitution Act, 1867*.”

MN–S Vice President and Minister of Justice Michelle LeClair said, “Just as families across the country have the right to raise their children in culturally appropriate surroundings, so too do Canada’s Métis, First Nations and Inuit peoples. We commend the Court for its thoughtful and meaningful deliberation in this matter and welcome this landmark decision giving effect to our inherent right to self-government, including our right to protect our children, our families and our communities.”

Indigenous children have historically been disproportionately represented in the child welfare system under Canada’s outdated colonial legislations and policies. The impacts of foster care on Métis children continue to be evident across Métis



communities today. The SCC decision affirms the Métis inherent right to self-government including child welfare. In upholding the constitutionality of Bill C-92, the court went further in its decision stating:

“Developed in cooperation with Indigenous peoples, the Act represents a significant step forward on the path to reconciliation. It forms part of the implementation of the UNDRIP by Parliament.”

MN–S Child and Family Services Minister, Kathie Pruden Nansel said, “The family unit is and always will be the foundation of our Métis communities and our MN–S government. The wellbeing of our children is paramount. Métis families have the inherent right to care for their children in a way that respects and promotes our culture, our values, and our ways. Today’s ruling gives our nation the clear authority to continue our journey to ensure we protect, support, and nurture our children grounded in Métis identity traditions, instead of seeing them lost and victimized in colonial systems that rob them of their connection to who we are.”

The Act respecting First Nation, Inuit, and Métis youth and families was first introduced in 2019. Bill C-92 received final assent in 2021. Métis Nation–Saskatchewan is already in the process of citizen engagement to ensure the family voice is represented within an MN–S child care model with a distinct Métis approach from prevention to apprehension and is eager to carry that work on now with the full support of the SCOC.

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About Métis Nation–Saskatchewan:

Métis Nation–Saskatchewan (MN–S) is built on a foundation of Métis identity, culture, values, and language. Empowered by the Métis within Saskatchewan, MN–S works to advance Métis rights and strengthen capacity. MN–S represents the political, socioeconomic, cultural, and educational interests of the Métis in the province through an elected representative system at local, regional, and provincial levels. Social media Links: [@MNSask](#), [@metisnationsask](#)

For media inquiries:

Rena Montgomerie – MN–S Senior Communications Officer
r.montgomerie@mns.work or 306-250-1092