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**For Immediate Release**



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## **Mi'kmaq Chiefs of Epekwitk Congratulate Manitoba Premier-elect Wab Kinew**

Chief Junior Gould and Chief Darlene Bernard are offering their congratulations to Manitoba Premier-elect Wab Kinew.

This week, Mr. Kinew was the first First Nations Premier elected in Canada's history.

The Manitoba result helps to affirm the positive direction taken in Canada relative to building reconciliation.

“Over the past number of years, First Nations in Canada have worked extremely hard to create a new relationship with the settler communities. We have been diligent in our outreach – and in our efforts to clearly demonstrate the valuable contributions we make to Canadian society,” said Chief Junior Gould of Abegweit First Nation.

“This election result helps to validate that work. And the fact that Premier-elect Kinew's father was unable to vote when he was a young man is a very real indication of how far we have come. In that respect, Premier-elect Kinew should serve as an important role model to a new generation of Indigenous youth. He is an accomplished man with a great deal to offer both to Manitobans – and to people across Canada.”

“The significance of this milestone cannot be understated. It underscores the fact that Canada is evolving in its relationship with Indigenous peoples, recognizing the profound importance of representation at the highest levels of government. It is a symbol of progress, a step forward in the pursuit of reconciliation, and a beacon of hope for generations to come,” added Chief Darlene Bernard of Lennox Island First Nation.

“Wab Kinew's Premier position will undoubtedly serve as a platform to address the pressing issues that affect all Canadians, and we trust that he will continue to advocate for the rights and well-being of First Nations peoples, ensuring our voices are heard and our concerns are addressed. It is my hope that this historic moment will set the stage for an era of collaboration, unity, and progress.”

Mr. Kinew has been the Member of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly for Fort Rouge for the last seven years – during which he served as Leader of the Official Opposition in that province. He is a former journalist and author – and worked in a senior level at the University of Winnipeg.