



# **UNITED CHIEFS and COUNCILS**

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

## **UCCMM STANDS UP FOR FIRST NATION SELF-GOVERNANCE RIGHTS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE**

UCCMM is proud to announce that it has been granted leave to intervene in the *Reference re: Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* at the Ontario Court for Appeal.

UCCMM's intervention will ensure that the Court understands that climate change is not an abstract issue but one that has already begun disproportionately affecting our inherent rights and jurisdiction over our lands and waters. As stewards of the largest freshwater island in the world, we are ensuring that the courts take into account the Anishinabek perspective when determining if climate change is a matter of national interest.

As the quality and quantity of our natural resources and medicines continue to diminish with the effects of climate change, it is vital that our voices be heard and our rights be respected. We are arguing that as treaty partners with the Crown, the Crown must uphold its end of the deal and respect our inherent constitutionally protected rights by mitigating climate change and ensuring that the federal government has the power to make polluters pay.

Though the Ontario government attempted to prevent the Court from hearing our knowledge on the effects of climate change on our territory and tried to lump all First Nation groups together into one submission, UCCMM and its legal team successfully defended against this argument on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019. As such, UCCMM will have the right to have its own distinct voice heard by the Court and its knowledge included in the evidence for this case.

UCCMM is set to intervene in this case on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019 to stand up for our lands and waters. Should we be successful in convincing the Court that it must interpret the division of powers between the Crown's orders government in a way that respects our inherent rights and jurisdiction to self-govern. This will fundamentally change the way in which First Nation governments are involved in division of powers issues.

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