



UNITED CHIEFS and COUNCILS OF MNIDOO MNISING

PRESS RELEASE

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

M'CHIGEENG, September 24, 2020 – UCCMM is proud to stand up for our lands and waters before the Supreme Court of Canada in the *Reference re: Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* appeal as an Intervener, jointly with the Anishinabek Nation. The key issue in this case is whether or not the federal *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* is constitutional and within the federal government's jurisdiction.

The UCCMM intervened in this case because climate change disproportionately affects First Nation communities, our traditional way of life, and our ability to assert and exercise jurisdiction in relation to environmental issues that directly impact their lands and their people. 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 concern. 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.

On September 23, 2020, Counsel for the Anishinabek Nation and UCCMM (Patricia Lawrence from Westaway Law Group) appeared before the Supreme Court of Canada to argue that First Nations should not be left without effective redress as a result of federal-provincial jurisdictional disputes. The Crown must be held accountable for the protection and preservation of the Aboriginal and Treaty rights recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. If the provinces are unable to effectively protect these rights, the federal government must be permitted to step in and enact legislation. Read all the arguments in the Factum of the Interveners [HERE](#).

The UCCMM has been actively involved in this case since the beginning and intervened at the Ontario Court of Appeal proceedings in April 2019. The majority of the Court of Appeal cited UCCMM's arguments and evidence in their reasons: see *Reference re Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*, [2019 ONCA 544](#) at paragraphs 12, 14 and 113.

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Further reading:

- [Case Summary on Supreme Court of Canada website](#)
- [Factum of the Joint Interveners, Anishinabek Nation and UCCMM](#)
- *Reference re Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*, [2019 ONCA 544](#) at paragraphs 12, 14 and 113