



Ref. 54820

March 8, 2022

Christine Holowka  
UFCW 1518 Indigenous Committee  
350 Columbia Street  
New Westminster BC V3L 1A6

Dear Christine Holowka:

Your letter of January 24, 2022, addressed to Honourable John Horgan, Premier, regarding the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation has been forwarded to me for response.

As you know, the federal government passed legislation in June 2021 to designate September 30 a statutory holiday for federal employees and federally regulated employers. This was done in direct response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #80.

This past year, the provincial government advised public sector employers to observe September 30 as a holiday in recognition of the obligations in many collective agreements. I, along with the Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of Finance, released a statement in August 2021 communicating our intent to engage Indigenous partners and communities on the most meaningful and appropriate way to mark September 30 moving forward. We acknowledge that the views of residential school survivors and their families are most important in shaping how we observe the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation each year. These engagements will occur over the coming months.

.../2

As you have highlighted in your letter, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation offers an important opportunity for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to come together to acknowledge our colonial history and the impacts of the residential school system. The importance of engaging and educating non-Indigenous peoples has come into much clearer focus with the continued findings of unmarked graves on the grounds of former Indian Residential Schools throughout British Columbia and across Canada. While these truths have always been known by residential school survivors and are well documented in the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, many people are only now learning about the harmful history and legacy of the residential school system.

I appreciate your observation about the need for employers to take the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation seriously and the role a provincial statutory holiday could play in facilitating public education, engagement, and reconciliation. To this end, we will be engaging businesses, workers, unions, and labour representatives in the months ahead on the ways in which employers can participate in and meaningfully contribute to the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

I appreciated the opportunity to read your letter. Your views as an Indigenous labour representative are valuable as we work with Indigenous partners and communities to determine what September 30 will look like in future years.

Sincerely,



Murray Rankin, QC  
Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

CC: Honourable John Horgan  
Premier



February 15, 2022

Christine Holowka  
United Food and Commercial Workers 1518 Indigenous Committee  
350 Columbia Street  
New Westminster, BC V3L 1A6

Dear Ms. Holowka,

**Re: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation in Yukon**

Thank you for your letter of January 24, 2022 in which you urge the Government of Yukon to make the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation a general statutory holiday in the Yukon.

I am pleased to advise that the Yukon government will soon be reaching out to Yukon First Nations governments and the public to seek input on whether the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation should become a general holiday for all employees in the Yukon. The results of that engagement process will inform the Yukon government's decision about how best to commemorate this important day. Should you have any questions about the Yukon government's process in this regard, please do not hesitate to reach out to Tess Lawrence, Director, Corporate Policy at the Yukon Department of Community Services, at [tess.lawrence@yukon.ca](mailto:tess.lawrence@yukon.ca).

Once again, thank you for reaching out on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Sandy Silver  
Premier of Yukon

- c. Anita Letendre, Member, UFCW 1518 Indigenous Committee
- Laurie Simon, Member, UFCW 1518 Indigenous Committee
- Marylou Fonda, Member, UFCW 1518 Indigenous Committee
- Raven Morningstar, Member, UFCW 1518 Indigenous Committee
- Kim Novak, President, UFCW 1518
- Brian MacDonald, Assistant Deputy Minister, Aboriginal Relations
- Tess Lawrence, Director, Corporate Policy, Community Services