

To: The Honourable Rechie Valdez,

I am writing to you not only as an Indigenous tourism business owner, but as someone who understands firsthand the transformative power Indigenous tourism has within our communities, economies, and cultural landscapes across Canada.

Indigenous tourism is far more than an economic sector. It is a living bridge between culture, history, reconciliation, education, and sustainable community development. Every investment made into Indigenous tourism creates opportunities that extend far beyond visitor experiences — it creates employment, empowers Indigenous entrepreneurs, preserves cultural knowledge, supports artists and knowledge keepers, and strengthens community pride for future generations.

As Indigenous business owners, many of us continue to face systemic barriers including limited access to funding, infrastructure challenges, reduced operational support, and the ongoing impacts of economic instability. Yet despite these challenges, Indigenous tourism operators continue to contribute significantly to local and national economies while offering authentic experiences that visitors from around the world actively seek out.

Reinvestment into Indigenous tourism is crucial at this moment in Canada's growth. Supporting Indigenous-led tourism initiatives means supporting economic reconciliation in a tangible and meaningful way. It means investing in small businesses that reinvest directly back into communities, cultural revitalization, youth opportunities, language preservation, land-based education, and intergenerational knowledge sharing.

When Indigenous tourism succeeds, entire regions benefit. Local accommodations, restaurants, transportation providers, artists, cultural venues, and surrounding small businesses all experience increased economic activity. Indigenous tourism creates sustainable growth while also strengthening Canada's identity as a destination rooted in diversity, culture, and truth.

I strongly encourage your office and the federal government to continue expanding investments, grant accessibility, infrastructure support, marketing opportunities, and long-term development strategies specifically dedicated to Indigenous tourism businesses and collectives. The return on these investments is not only economic — it is social, cultural, educational, and deeply human.

As an Indigenous entrepreneur, I believe we are not simply building businesses; we are building spaces for healing, understanding, storytelling, and connection. Continued federal support and reinvestment would demonstrate a meaningful commitment to reconciliation through action rather than words alone.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate the work being done to support Canadian small businesses and tourism initiatives, and I hope Indigenous tourism remains a priority within those conversations moving forward.

Sincerely,

Nicole Gordon  
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