

The Honourable Rechie Valdez
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

June 2, 2026

RE: Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) Funding & Future

Dear Minister Valdez,

On behalf of the **North Thompson Aboriginal Cultural Centre Society** in Clearwater, British Columbia, we are writing to express our deep concern regarding the current funding crisis facing the **Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC)** and the significant impact this will have on Indigenous communities, organizations, and tourism operators across Canada.

The loss of federal operational support for ITAC is a serious setback not only for Indigenous tourism, but also for rural and remote communities that rely on tourism as a key driver of economic development. Indigenous tourism has become an important contributor to local economies, creating employment opportunities, supporting Indigenous entrepreneurs, preserving cultural knowledge, and providing authentic cultural experiences for visitors from around the world.

Tourism remains one of Canada's strongest economic sectors, and Indigenous tourism has been one of its fastest-growing segments. At a time when governments are seeking opportunities to strengthen local economies and support reconciliation through economic participation, the withdrawal of operational funding from ITAC sends a concerning message to Indigenous tourism operators, communities, investors, and industry partners.

Organizations such as ITAC provide essential leadership, training, marketing support, business development resources, and national representation that many small Indigenous organizations and businesses cannot access on their own. The loss of this support infrastructure will disproportionately affect rural and remote Indigenous communities that already face significant economic and geographic challenges.

Here in the North Thompson Valley, we have seen firsthand how Indigenous tourism contributes to economic growth, cultural revitalization, education, and community pride. Through cultural programming, community events, traditional knowledge sharing, and visitor engagement, Indigenous tourism creates meaningful opportunities that benefit Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities alike.

The North Thompson Aboriginal Cultural Centre Society respectfully urges the Government of Canada to restore meaningful operational funding for ITAC and to recognize Indigenous tourism as an essential and ongoing contributor to Canada's economic future, reconciliation efforts, and cultural heritage.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Yours in Community Spirit

Cindy Wilgosh

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