

BRECHIN UNITED CHURCH

Serving community and caring for all God's Creation



Minister: Rev. Katherine Brittain

May 1st, 2026

Honourable David Eby
Premier of British Columbia
premier@gov.bc.ca

Dear Mr. Eby,

We write to you as Council of Brechin United Church located in Nanaimo, on Vancouver Island. We are grounded in Faith, and also in a shared commitment to reconciliation, justice, and respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

We are guided to walk humbly, to act justly and always with Love, and to repair what has been broken. In this spirit, we wish to express our concern regarding recent discussions about potential changes to the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA). BC passed DRIPA in 2019 as its legislated (2019) *framework for Reconciliation*. ** The changes proposed undermine that legislated commitment to reconciliation. We understand you very recently made some concessions to your initial intentions but feel it's important for you to still hear our message.

For many in our community, DRIPA represents more than legislation. It is a meaningful step toward aligning provincial laws with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and toward addressing the long-standing harms rooted in colonial systems and policies. It has been understood as a commitment to move forward in partnership, grounded in respect, recognition, and shared decision-making.

We recognize that governance is complex and that there are competing pressures and perspectives. At the same time, reconciliation is NOT a process that can be paused without consequence. Any action that signals a retreat—whether perceived or real—risks undermining trust that has taken generations to begin rebuilding.

As people of faith, we are also mindful that many religious institutions in this country were directly involved in harms against Indigenous peoples. This history calls us not to withdraw, but to show up with humility and to support meaningful, sustained change. For us, Reconciliation is not an abstract concept; it is a lived responsibility.

We respectfully ask:

- Will your government reaffirm its full commitment to DRIPA and its implementation?
- Will your government avoid actions that would suspend, weaken, or delay progress toward alignment with Indigenous rights?

- Will your government continue to advance Reconciliation in partnership with Indigenous Nations, with transparency and accountability?

We believe that British Columbia has an opportunity to demonstrate principled leadership—one that honours commitments, strengthens relationships, and reflects the values of justice and respect that many British Columbians hold deeply.

Last but not least, will your government work to educate politicians, business people, and the general public about the true spirit of reconciliation and the benefits that collaboration can have in creating a prosperous economy within a thriving sustainable environment?

We offer this letter in a spirit of care, not criticism, and remain hopeful that the path forward will continue to reflect the intent and promise that DRIPA represents.

Respectfully and with our deep hope for your compassionate and wise action moving forward,

Darlene Darby

Darlene Darby Council Chair,
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** The designation of DRIPA as BC's framework for reconciliation is from the following website: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/indigenous-people/new-relationship/united-nations-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples>

This letter was also sent to:

Spencer Chandra Herbert, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
Sheila Malcolmson MLA
George Anderson MLA