



## CHIEFS COUNCIL

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Monday, June 9, 2025**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **MATAWA CHIEFS COUNCIL CONTINUE TO ADVANCE STRATEGIC VISION AND ENDURANCE AMID PASSAGE OF ONTARIO'S BILL 5**

**Thunder Bay, ON** — The Chiefs of the Matawa First Nations are standing in unity to advance a strategic vision and endurance amid the passage of Ontario's Bill 5. While advocates from civil liberties, environmental organizations and other First Nations organizations across the province are calling for the repeal of Bill 5, the Matawa Chiefs Council (MCC) remain committed to asserting First Nations' rights through political and diplomatic channels—by demanding meaningful engagement, asserting jurisdiction, and pushing for direct government-to-government dialogue on the development of regulations involved around Bill 5.

In a [letter](#) issued today, the MCC urgently requested proposed meeting dates with the Premier's office by Friday, June 13, 2025, to begin a dialogue.

To the Peoples of Matawa and all those who fought during Bill 5's legislative process, and to those who continue to assert their opposition to the legislation, the MCC made this statement:

*"Unfortunately, killing Bill 5 now, after it received Royal Assent on June 4, 2025, will take a legal challenge which could be protracted by years or decades.*

*We stand behind everyone, including children, in our Nations who expressed their opposition to the bill and continue to do so. Many First Nations amongst our Council were clear in their opposition to Bill 5 and we continue to stand by them also. The way the accelerated legislative process took place was/is not acceptable to us. We are fully aware that, from the start, the Ontario legislature was/is not designed to be in our favour.*

*Regardless, the Matawa Chiefs Council are united in the view that the passing of Bill 5 is a short-term setback, and we believe our overall objectives can still be achieved in the long run. We believe there is still a way to work together in partnership to plan for the development of the Matawa territories and homelands, including the Ring of Fire. We are humbled by momentum built and proud of the awareness raised by our Peoples. We believe their heart, determination and love for the land not only sets the stage for lasting change—it guarantees it."*

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**For more information, please contact** Carol Audet, Communications Manager – Matawa First Nations at (807) 632-9663 or by email at [caudet@matawa.on.ca](mailto:caudet@matawa.on.ca).



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