



Affaires autochtones
et du Nord Canada

Indigenous and
Northern Affairs Canada

Sous-ministre

Deputy Minister

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0H4

11 JUIL. 2017

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Mr. Jean-Denis Fréchette
Parliamentary Budget Officer
Officer of the Parliamentary Budget Officer
50 O'Connor Street, 10th Floor
OTTAWA ON K1A 0A9

Dear Mr. Fréchette:

I am writing in response to your letter, dated June 22, 2017, requesting information on the costing estimate of Bill S-3, An Act to amend the *Indian Act* (elimination of sex-based inequities in registration), as introduced in Parliament on October 25, 2016, as well as the alternate legislative framework that reflects Senate amendments.

I have attached an annex to address your request that provides a cost estimate of Bill S-3 as introduced (first reading print) in Parliament. Based on demographic analysis, between 28,000 and 35,000 individuals would become newly entitled to Indian registration as a result of the proposed amendments in Bill S-3 as introduced in Parliament in October 2016.

As you noted, the Senate made significant amendments to Bill S-3, including an amendment brought forward by Senator Marilou McPhedran, which was adopted by the Senate. As you are likely aware, Senator McPhedran's amendment was removed from the bill by the House of Commons, which provided third reading and passage of the bill on June 21, 2017. The demographic projections currently available to the Department with respect to changes to the *Indian Act* similar to Senator McPhedran's proposal date back to a 2010 report done by Stewart Clatworthy (see attached). While these projections are informative, they are outdated, and contain various scenarios with different results depending on which source data is relied upon. These estimates do not provide solid enough information to adequately assess the potential impacts of the proposed approach, or to support meaningful consultations with potentially impacted communities or individuals. Therefore, the Department has started work to retain the services of demographic experts to update this information.

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It is also important to note that the House of Commons adopted two amendments to the bill by changing the long title of the bill to Bill S-3, An Act to amend the *Indian Act* in response to the decision in *Descheneaux c. Canada (Procureur général)*, and by adding a reference that consultations with First Nations and other Indigenous groups on the broader issues relating to Indian registration, band membership and citizenship, which will take place following the passage of Bill S-3 as part of Stage II of this initiative, will be conducted through the lens of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Following its passage of the bill, the House of Commons sent a message to the Senate seeking concurrence of its amendments. The amendments passed by the House of Commons will have no effect on the number of individuals newly entitled to Indian registration.

While I am providing the costing to respond to your request, please note that my Department will continue the necessary demographic work to prepare a full financial analysis of Bill S-3, in anticipation of consultations with First Nations, on the broader issues relating to Indian registration, band membership and citizenship that will be launched after the adoption of Bill S-3.

If you have any questions or require further clarification, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Hélène Laurendeau

Encl.

c.c.: Ms. Katharine Rechico