

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NEW BRUNSWICK BLOCKING FIRST NATIONS STUDENTS FROM HIGH SCHOOL - BUT NOT STAFF

TORONTO - New Brunswick's treatment of Listuguj First Nation has caught the attention of Canada's 'civil rights watchdog', the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA).

The CCLA has written to Hugh J. Flemming, New Brunswick's Minister of Justice and Public Safety, objecting to their government's unlawful treatment of students from the Listuguj First Nation who attend Sugarloaf Senior High School.

"The Listuguj First Nation has been advised by the government that almost all of the Sugarloaf students are forbidden to cross the Quebec/New Brunswick border, for the purposes of attending school. This is contrary to the Government's own law," said Michael Bryant, executive director and chief legal counsel of the CCLA.

High school students from Listuguj First Nation have been blocked by New Brunswick from attending high school in person because they live just across the border - in Quebec. **While students are not able to attend, New Brunswick is allowing staff members from Listuguj First Nation to cross the border to work.**

"We have reviewed the government's most recent emergency order, signed on October 22, 2020. That order prohibits unnecessary travel into New Brunswick, but creates an exception for "residents of Listuguj First nation and Point-a-la-Croix, Quebec," said Cara Zwibel, the CCLA's Director of Fundamental Freedoms.

"Arbitrary and patently unreasonable distinctions between residents of different provinces and First Nation communities in Canada require immediate correction. By singling out First Nation students, your Government risks being accused of racial discrimination and violating equality guarantees under our Constitution."

"We strongly urge you to ensure that Listuguj First Nation students are able to enter New Brunswick and attend their school," she concluded.

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About the Canadian Civil Liberties Association

The CCLA is an independent, non-profit organization with supporters from New Brunswick and across the country. Founded in 1964, the CCLA is a national human rights organization committed to defending the rights, dignity, safety, and freedoms of all people in Canada.

Interviews are available in English & French:

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