



## Aboriginal Housing Management Association

### PRESS RELEASE

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### Federal Budget Once Again Fails Urban Indigenous Peoples

**Traditional Territories of the Squamish Nation/West Vancouver, BC** – Despite several years of assurances by the federal government that they are committed to the creation of an Urban Indigenous Housing Strategy, yesterday's budget failed to provide any dedicated funding – something that has outraged the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA).

In response to the budget AHMA Chief Executive Officer Margaret Pfoh stated that “I have been in the Indigenous housing sector for over twenty-five years and have never been as shocked or as disappointed as I was yesterday.” Pfoh goes on to say that “In 2017 this government created a National Housing Strategy for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples. In 2019 they campaigned on adding a fourth stream for Urban Indigenous Peoples who make-up 87% of Indigenous Peoples across the country. Since then, there has been virtually no progress and now this budget doesn't even make mention of it, despite the fact that the Prime Minister included it in the mandate letters for both the Minister and the Parliamentary Secretary for Families, Children and Social Development.”

During a roundtable earlier this morning with housing providers from across the country, Minister for Families, Children and Social Development Ahmed Hussen stated that while no explicit mention was made of Urban Indigenous housing in the budget, funding would indeed be allocated. However, Pfoh found little reassurance in his comments. “Isn't this always the way it is – Urban Indigenous Peoples being nothing more than a footnote in the eyes of government?”

AHMA is not alone in expressing their disappointment in yesterday's budget. Tim Richter, President & CEO of the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness notes that the “most glaring and disappointing gap in Budget 2021 is the lack of dedicated funding for an Urban Indigenous Housing Strategy.” Robert Byers, Chair of the CHRA Indigenous Caucus goes on to say that “For years, government officials have told us that an urban, rural and northern Indigenous housing strategy was a priority. The absence of such a strategy in today's Budget will mean that urban and rural Indigenous peoples will continue to face inequality and lack of access to safe and affordable housing, and that is a disgrace.”

Pfoh concluded her comments by noting that “This government continues to fail to understand that by not providing dedicated, culturally appropriate housing for Urban Indigenous Peoples they are simply building on a legacy of assimilation rooted in colonialism. When will this government learn that they need to provide funding for housing that is for Indigenous, by Indigenous – run by Indigenous agencies? This government has done nothing more than pay lip service to Canada's Urban Indigenous Peoples and enough is enough.”

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## **Aboriginal Housing Management Association**

### **About the Aboriginal Housing Management Association**

AHMA is an umbrella organization composed of 41 Members that are each Indigenous Housing and Service providers. Our members represent over 8000 Indigenous families living in urban, rural and northern regions of British Columbia. Created for Indigenous by Indigenous, AHMA is the first Indigenous Housing Authority in Canada.