**Letter of Support for the Algonquins of Ontario.**

This letter is in support of the Algonquins of Ontario First Nation in response to Bill 5 (Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act,2025). Framed as an economic stimulus package, if passed this bill would impose:

* **Marginalization of Indigenous rights and environmental knowledge.**
* **Rollback of existing environmental protections.**
* **Increased risk to biodiversity and endangered species.**
* **Insufficient environmental oversight and assessment of development projects.**
* **Prioritization of short-term economic gains at the expense of long-term environmental sustainability.**

ARA remains committed in its support to the first peoples of Canada, their histories, languages and cultures. First Nations' relationship to the land is spiritual and that spiritual connection is constitutionally recognized and legally protected. Access to the land and participation in land use decision-making processes to protect their spirituality, cultural practices, and traditions has been a key concern for First Nations since European contact.

The Royal Proclamation, signed in 1763 by King George III, has driven the relationship between the Crown and Aboriginal Peoples. The Supreme Court of Canada, in 1973, in the Calder decision, recognized that Aboriginal title existed in law, and therefore could be enforced and further declared Aboriginal title to be “a right to the land itself.” According to the Supreme Court of Canada, the First Nation relationship and ownership of the land are legally recognized and constitutionally protected in Section 35 of the Constitution Act.

ARA strongly opposes Bill 5 which contains no affirmation to protect the rights of Indigenous peoples, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). If passed, this bill is an infringement upon First Nations treaty rights and the province of Ontario’s duty to consult, jeopardizing First Nations cultural heritage and the environment.

We demand the government of Ontario remove Bill 5 in its entirety and uphold the Government of Canada’s duty to Indigenous peoples right to free, prior and informed consent that affect their lands, territories and rights.

Sincerely,

Archaeological Research Associates Ltd.