

MEDIA RELEASE

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Chiefs Frustrated with NS Decisions for Cannabis Industry

The Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs (Assembly) has long recognized the importance of participating in the cannabis industry and has met with Premier McNeil numerous times to discuss how the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia could move forward, in their own communities when it comes to cannabis retail.

Cannabis was legalized to address the black market; but without access to legal cannabis, the black market continues to thrive in our Mi'kmaq communities.

“We’ve been clear to communicate that we support the elimination of the Cannabis black market by ensuring quality-tested products are readily accessible to our community members,” said Chief Terrance Paul, Co-Chair of the Assembly. “With ongoing concerns regarding the health of our community members, we want to ensure proper access to safe products.”

For the Assembly, this is a Governance issue. Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* affirms the right to self-govern, which includes the ability to develop laws that address health, law and order, and control of intoxicants on reserve.

Despite the numerous discussions with the Province, yesterday the Assembly heard that Nova Scotia has already built a plan for moving forward on cannabis edibles – without the inclusion of the Assembly.

“It is always our goal to work in partnership with the government of Nova Scotia,” continued Chief Paul. “As a government, we have to look at the health, safety and welfare of our citizens. As we continue to look at how to address the health and medical issues associated with cannabis in our communities, we hope that we can come back to the table with government partners and work together. Ultimately, we must move forward in the best interest of our people regardless of recent decisions made,” said Chief Paul.

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