



Press Release Attention News Editors

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Conflict of Interest Case in the Hands of Provincial Judge

Edmonton, AB (March 20, 2008) – Audrey Poitras, President of the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA), confirmed today that the court decision respecting the conflict of interest charges against Rick Boucher has yet to be rendered, contrary to some claims being circulated in the community.

“The matter is now before a Provincial Court Judge and it would be premature for anyone to predict how the judge will rule,” she said.

On December 18, 2007, the MNA Judiciary Council, the judicial arm of the MNA, found Boucher in conflict of interest for using a company he owned to sign an agreement with the Métis National Council regarding certain Health Canada funding, when, as a member of MNA Provincial Council, he had earlier voted in favour of a motion for the MNA to pursue a direct bilateral agreement with Health Canada for the same funding.

Boucher contested the Judiciary Council decision in Provincial Court and Justice Binder heard the case on March 14, 2008. The judge will issue his decision within the next three months.

“There are many issues at stake in this court action,” President Poitras said. “Not least of which is the jurisdiction of the Judiciary Council.”

“Throughout this process, Mr. Boucher and his lawyers used every technicality argument they could possibly think of to undermine the powers and authority of the Judiciary Council and to escape prosecution.”

“During the course of the hearing on March 13th, they raised certain technical issues around the wording of the Conflict of Interest provisions of the MNA By-Laws, and Mr. Boucher now claims that our lawyer conceded that he was not in conflict of interest. This is a gross misrepresentation of the facts. We continue to maintain Mr. Boucher’s conduct amounts to a conflict of interest and was gravely detrimental to the interests of the MNA and this was made clear at the hearing.”

President Poitras hopes ultimately justice will be served and the authority of the MNA Judiciary Council will be upheld.

“The MNA must and will abide by the law,” she said. “And now we must all wait on how the judge will rule in this important case before any side can claim victory.”

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