



Grand Council Treaty #3

Office of the Ogichidaa

P.O. BOX 1720
Kenora, Ontario P9N 3X7
Ph: (807) 788-1406
Fax: (807) 548-4776

MEDIA RELEASE

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Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh Outraged by Lesser Charge in Trailer Hitch Killing

Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh and Grand Council Treaty #3 express outrage at the news of the reduction of charges laid against Brayden Bushby in the killing of Barbara Kentner. A member of Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation, Kentner was walking on the street late when evening with her sister when she was struck by a trailer hitch thrown from a moving vehicle.

Brayden Bushby, now 20 and whose trial is expected to begin October 13, had been facing second-degree murder charges. That charge has now been reduced to charges of manslaughter and aggravated assault.

“We see this time and time again where violence against indigenous people is not given the same level of care and attention in the Canadian justice system,” said Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh, “It is difficult to believe there is not a racial component to this decision. For our people, it is easy to see that had the situation been reversed – had an indigenous person struck and killed a non-indigenous person – the accused would already be in jail facing a murder charge.”

The incident, occurring on January 29, 2017, made national headlines at a time when the city of Thunder Bay was under scrutiny for systemic and widespread racism in the city and in its police force. The death of Kentner, who was a member of the Treaty #3 community of Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation, serves as a reminder of the dangers facing Treaty #3 citizens that find themselves in the city of Thunder Bay.

“Thunder Bay is a destination for many of our people here in Treaty #3 territory,” Kavanaugh said, “Whether living there or just visiting, we all know full well how notorious that city is for its widespread racism and hatred. For someone to be killed in such a manner, it demonstrates how problematic our peoples’ experiences can be there.”

During this time, Ogichidaa Kavanaugh and Grand Council Treaty #3 would like to express sincerest condolences to the family of Barbara Kentner. Grand Council Treaty #3 and the leadership of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 will continue to press on in their work on justice system reform, advocacy for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MIIWG), and press for action on systemic racism in all its forms.

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For more information please contact: Daniel Morriseau, Political Advisor – Grand Council Treaty #3
(807) 464-2647 or by email daniel.morriseau@treaty3.ca