

**Responses to Follow Up Requests from the
Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples – November 22, 2016**

Question/Request #1

Senator Tannas(CPC) & Senator Dyck (Lib): Were the litigants consulted or engaged directly regarding Bill S-3?

Answer: No. Unfortunately, while efforts were made through the Department of Justice to inform the legal counsel who represented the litigants in the *Descheneaux et al. v Canada* case, the litigants were not directly engaged with regarding Bill S-3.

However, it is important to note that the Chief of the plaintiffs' community, Chief Rick O'Bomsawin of the Odanak First Nation, was informed via letter from Minister Bennett of the launch of the Government's response to the Descheneaux decision on July 28, 2016, which included links to a comprehensive discussion paper on the two-stage approach. He was also notified immediately upon the posting online of the draft legislative amendments on October 14, 2016. Lastly, Chief O'Bomsawin participated in the information session held in Quebec in partnership with the AFNQL. The plaintiffs' legal counsel also participated as an observer.

Question/Request #2:

Senator Patterson (CPC): What is the backlog of applications being processed as a result of Bill C-3?

Answer: As of November 22, 2016, 53,629 Bill C-3 entitlement applications have been received. 38,467 people have been registered under paragraph 6(1)c.1) of the Act, and 241 Bill C-3 applications still under review.

Question/Request #3:

Senator Patterson (CPC): Request for answer to whether department has capacity to deal with projected influx of new applications for status.

Answer: Using the experience gained from the Bill C-3 amendments, the Department has secured \$19M over 5 years in new funding to support the process and registration costs that will be required to process those newly entitled individuals following the coming into force of Bill S-3.

Question/Request #4:

Senator Patterson (CPC): Request for details on the source of funds for education and what amount officials are looking to secure.

Answer: The Government has increased funding for grants through the Canada Student Loan program by 50 per cent. Indigenous students have access to these funds and support for individuals who qualify is statutory (if you qualify, which most Indigenous students would, you get the funding).

We are also working across Government to ensure Indigenous students can better access increased Canada Student Grants and key initiatives such as the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy and the First Nation and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy.

In terms of the Post -Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP), given these other expanded funding sources, we are working with educators, parents and First Nations governments on expanding the scope of this program to deal with post-secondary funding for Indigenous students in a more holistic way, to better meet the actual needs of Indigenous students.

PSSSP is a federal program directly linked to registration (i.e. status Indians can request access to this program from their First Nations who are responsible for the allocation of funds). INAC's annual budget does not automatically increase to take into account the newly entitled population of status Indians. INAC's current annual budget to support students through PSSSP is approximately \$305M.

Question/Request #5:

Senator Patterson (CPC): Request for breakdown of numbers for how many people are being recruited to the Department and how many people are being hired to deal with processing applications.

Answer: Using the experience gained from the Bill C-3 amendments, the Department has secured \$19M in funding to support the process and registration costs that will be required to process those newly entitled individuals following the coming into force of Bill S-3. The table below includes the projected numbers of applications for registration under the Bill S-3 amendments, and a series of assumptions outlined below.

Year	Projected applications	Projected Total Full Time Equivalents.
17-18	19,000	59.5
18-19	10,000	43.5
19-20	5,000	25.5
20-21	5,000	19.5
21-22	4,000	19.5

Assumptions:

- 43,000 applications are anticipated over five years
 - Projections of volume was made based on application intake trends for Bill C-3
 - Intake applications would start after the Bill receives Royal Assent in February 2017
 - Based on Bill C-3 experience, INAC anticipates that the first year following September 2017 will be the year where we receive the most applications
 - Complexity rate of approximately 8% of applications is currently being observed with Bill C-3 applications
 - The service standard is six to eight months
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Question/Request #6:

Senator Patterson (CPC): Request for detailed breakdown of the Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) benefits per year. Of the money being allocated for this project, how much is being dedicated to newly entitled individuals?

Answer: As announced in the 2016 Fall Economic Update, the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program from Health Canada will receive approximately \$130M over five years dedicated solely for those newly entitled individuals stemming from Bill S-3.

Due to the Bill S-3's coming into force date of February and the time required to register new applications, the new funding varies from year to year. Below is the approximate yearly breakdown of the 130M announced in the Fall Economic Update:

2017/18	\$8,410,000
2018/19	\$24,450,000
2019/20	\$30,040,000
2020/21	\$32,820,000
2021/22	\$35,000,000
TOTAL	\$130,720,000
