huu ay aht

ANCIENT SPIRIT, MODERN MIND

June 30, 2021

Dear Citizens,

I am starting to feel a bit of relief and optimism in the air that has been missing for a year. Numbers are dropping and vaccination rates are climbing. I see that as a positive sign. We are finally almost out of the woods.

The Province of B.C. announced that, as of July 1, 2021, they would lift the State of Emergency in our province. This ends the longest State of Emergency in British Columbia's history. This is a great step and shows we are heading in the right direction.

It is very exciting to watch as British Columbia rolls out its Restart Plan. You, like me, are probably enjoying seeing a few people you have not seen in a while. It has been a relief to safely visit family and friends after such a long absence. We must remember that, although we are able to gather again, the risk of COVID-19 is still very real.

We must continue to practice safety protocols to protect our unvaccinated youth and others who are not able to be vaccinated. Those of us fortunate enough to have our double dose must realize not everyone is there yet.

On July 1, restrictions will change again, allowing us freedoms we have not seen in more than a year. The province has opened to recreational travel in B.C. and the rest of Canada. If you do decide to travel, make sure you practice all COVID safety protocols – wash your hands, do not touch your face, keep your distance, and wear a mask if you have not received a second dose or feel it is a safe choice. Step 3 of B.C.'s Restart brings fewer limits on the size of gatherings, and fairs and festivals can return to normal. This will mean we can soon host potlatches and meetings in person. Although mask wearing is still recommended inside, it is no longer mandatory if you are fully vaccinated.

It is at this time we must use the sacred teachings and values of our ancestors and practice ʔiisaak when it comes to the decisions of each community and individual in B.C. As restrictions lessen, not everyone will be comfortable with that choice. We are all connected – Hišuk ma c̓awak – Everything is One. We must take care of one another.

As more people get their second dose, I am filled with hope. I see that more than 75 percent of eligible British Columbians have had their first shot. The province predicts that by the end of July that same percentage will have two vaccinations. Given these numbers, we should be able to gather in person again soon.

Much like our ancestors before us, we have made sacrifices for the betterment of our future and for the health and well-being of everyone. We must continue to be Huu-ay-aht Strong as we near the end of this difficult time in Canada.

Sincerely,



Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr.