



Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Asper Foundation Pledges \$25,000 Weekly Aid as MKO Calls for Urgent Support for thousands of Northern Manitoba Wildfire Evacuees

Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Treaty Five Territory - Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) is calling on all Manitobans to stand in solidarity with northern First Nations communities as wildfires continue to force mass evacuations. **More than 19,000 First Nations evacuees have now registered with the Canadian Red Cross**, many arriving in southern Manitoba with little more than the clothes on their backs.

Two additional First Nations are evacuating this week, bringing the total number of displaced families even higher. With more than 3,000 new evacuees expected in the coming days, the need for support is urgent and growing.

Families are being housed in hotels and shelters for extended periods, often without access to necessities. Many were forced to flee with no time to prepare, arriving without baby supplies, hygiene products, or even proper clothing.

"We are deeply grateful to the organizations and volunteers who have stepped up to help," said Grand Chief Garrison Settee. "But donor fatigue is real, and we cannot rely on the same groups to carry this burden alone. We need new partners, new donors, and renewed compassion. The fires have not stopped - and neither has the suffering."

In a powerful act of generosity, **The Asper Foundation in conjunction with Rady Jewish Community Centre, has partnered with MKO to provide some much needed respite to evacuees with tickets to various local sports and entertainment events and now has pledged financial support of \$25,000 per week to support evacuees until the emergency ends.** MKO applauds this commitment and urges other organizations, businesses, and individuals to follow suit.

Immediate Needs:

- Non-perishable food items
- Baby formula, diapers, strollers, and carriers
- New underclothing and hygiene products
- Blankets
- Toys and entertainment for children

"You see the smoke in the south," Grand Chief Settee added. "But in the north, our people are fleeing flames. This is not just a northern crisis it's a Manitoba crisis."

"Our family is proud to stand with and support our fellow Manitobans in this time of great need, and

we urge others to do the same”, said Gail Asper, Chair of The Asper Foundation.

Donations can be coordinated through MKO and partner organizations. Every contribution makes a difference.

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Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) is a non-profit, political advocacy organization that has represented 26 First Nation communities in Manitoba’s North since 1981. The MKO represents more than 72,000 First Nations people.

