



STAND FOR TRUTH

Coalition to Preserve Truth

Coalition Representing Survivors and Intergenerational Survivors of Residential Schools Granted Intervener Status in the *Attorney General of Canada v. Larry Philip Fontaine in his personal capacity and in his capacity as the executor of the estate of Agnes Mary Fontaine, deceased, et al. before the Supreme Court of Canada* (the “IAP Case”)

Victoria BC, Friday, April 28th, 2017

The Coalition to Preserve Truth – A Coalition representing survivors, and the descendants of survivors of residential schools has been granted leave to intervene in the Supreme Court of Canada. The Coalition is fighting to save the personal accounts of over 38,000 residential school survivors (the “IAP” documents), which are currently set to be destroyed in 15 years.

The IAP was a process that provided compensation to victims of serious physical and sexual abuse in residential schools. The process has produced the largest collection of firsthand accounts of the residential school system, with documents pertaining to over 38,000 survivors. Survivors were supposed to have been provided information to allow for an informed choice around whether they wished to preserve or destroy their personal IAP documents. This choice was never given in a meaningful, timely or supported way. As it stands, the records are set to be destroyed in 15 years.

On May 25th, 2017, the Supreme Court will rule on the future of the IAP documents. The Coalition to Preserve Truth, which represents survivors of residential schools and their descendants, will be arguing that the IAP documents should be preserved while honoring individual rights to privacy. The Coalition is motivated by the ongoing impact of intergenerational residential school trauma in Indigenous communities, and believes that preserving these documents is in our collective interest.

The intergenerational effects of trauma on individuals, families and communities has been well studied. The enormous personal trauma of residential school survivors, as well as the massive displacement of Indigenous children from their communities, has made it difficult for families of survivors to know the full extent of this trauma. As such, descendants of survivors often rely on second-hand accounts of residential schools, archives and historical records to understand the ongoing impact of residential schools.

The permanent loss of tens of thousands of documents will deny descendants of residential school survivors the opportunity to heal by removing their ability to develop a greater collective understanding of harms done to their communities. Moreover, it is a serious blow to an already limited residential school record.

“The profound impacts of residential schools are still rippling through our communities today and will continue for generations to come,” said Carey Newman, founder of the Coalition and creator of the iconic Witness Blanket. “We need to ensure that future generations can access specific knowledge about what led to their broken communities, fragmented families and loss of language and culture.”



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Canada has a long history of making decisions about Indigenous, Metis and Inuit peoples, rather than with Indigenous, Metis and Inuit peoples. Indigenous communities across Canada have rich and robust resources for managing situations like these, and the Coalition hopes that the Supreme Court of Canada will make space for the questions to be reframed so that Indigenous Legal Orders can be brought into the decision-making.

The Coalition believes that the interests of children and families of residential school survivors must be considered in this case. In order to participate, the Coalition must raise \$50,000 by May 12th, 2017 to cover the cost of intervention. The Coalition is gratefully accepting donations at gofundme.com/standfortruth. Ongoing updates about the case can be found at [facebook.com/standfortruth](https://www.facebook.com/standfortruth)

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Links:

<http://standfortruth.ca>

www.gofundme.com/standfortruth

<https://www.facebook.com/standfortruth>

Twitter @Stand4Truth_IAP

Instagram @Stand4Truth_IAP

The Coalition to Preserve Truth represents survivors and intergenerational survivors of Canada's residential schools. The Coalition recognizes the ongoing impact of intergenerational trauma in Indigenous communities and believes that the preservation of the IAP documents are in the collective interest of Indigenous communities. The Coalition wishes to preserve the documents while honoring individuals' rights to privacy. For more information, visit gofundme.com/standfortruth