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Southern Chiefs' Organization Welcomes Announcement of \$305 Million in Additional Funding for Indigenous Community Support Fund

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ANISHINAABE AND DAKOTA TERRITORY, MB — Grand Chief Jerry Daniels of the Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) welcomes today's funding announcement from federal Indigenous Services Minister Marc Miller of \$305 million in additional funding for the Indigenous Community Support Fund. The additional funds are needed for First Nations leaders and communities to continue to effectively deal with the COVID-19 pandemic and to prepare for a second wave, especially in light of the recent increase in confirmed cases across Manitoba.

Grand Chief Jerry Daniels states, "We are pleased by today's announcement and will be paying close attention to how these funds are distributed to southern First Nations communities. This additional funding is welcome news and will support our Chiefs, health care professionals, and community leaders to continue to keep our communities and community members safe."

The \$305 million announced today will be distributed through a combination of allocations directly to First Nation communities, and needs-based funding that will be application driven for organizations serving off-reserve members and urban Indigenous peoples.

Last month SCO received \$775,165 from the fund to support essential services and to prevent and respond to potential COVID-19 outbreaks for off-reserve SCO members. This funding is being distributed through SCO's 34 Anishinaabe and Dakota member communities. In May, SCO distributed \$200,000 through Tribal Councils to support southern First Nation citizens.

The Indigenous Community Support Fund, which now totals \$685 million, was first announced on March 18, 2020. The fund acknowledges the primary role of Indigenous leadership and community-based solutions in effectively responding to the challenges brought by COVID-19.

SCO is also working with its communities to address the pandemic and other health care challenges, including launching a flu shot campaign planned for the fall and winter of 2020-2021. Flu shot clinics will be held by SCO to help prevent and lessen the impacts that result from the combination of COVID-19 and other infectious viruses and diseases, such as the flu.

The Southern Chiefs' Organization represents 34 First Nations that came together in 1999 to protect, preserve, promote, and enhance First Nations peoples' inherent rights, languages,

customs, and traditions through the application and implementation of the spirit and intent of the Treaty-making process.

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