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## **EARLY ELECTION DATES ANNOUNCED BY THE PREMIER**

### *SCO's response to the election announcement*

#### **ANISHINAABE and DAKOTA TERRITORY, MB – June 19, 2019:**

Today Premier Brian Pallister announced an early election date of September 10, 2019 for the province of Manitoba. Initially set for October 6, 2020, the conservative administration has pushed the provincial election forward by over a year. This means Manitobans will now have to vote not once, but twice this fall for provincial *and* federal level governments to represent them in the coming years.

SCO Grand Chief Jerry Daniels wants First Nations people in southern Manitoba to understand the importance and the relevance of their votes at the polls, “We now have a provincial and a federal election taking place right after each other in 2019, which will decide the Canadian political landscape. These elections may not be for Indigenous specific leadership, but they absolutely have impacts on our rights, realities, and the resources that impact our communities. For generations, elections have been held that did not adequately represent First Nations but have harmed our people systemically. Until 1960, First Nations were not allowed to vote unless they gave up their status. This was a blatant violation of human rights that was strategically done to limit our engagement with the democratic processes of Canada. While I respect every individual’s choice to vote, and who to vote for, we can no longer afford to *not* have our voices heard and be exempt from those decision-making tables. The best way to have a say in who represents our regions and interests in government is to cast your vote this September and October in both elections.”

For the upcoming elections, the SCO will be utilizing a voter awareness initiative that will outline what is needed to vote, where to vote, and the political party platforms on the issues that voters will be considering when heading to the polls. “We want Indigenous people to be informed about the candidates that are vying for their support, and informed about the process and location of voting. First Nations will make their own decisions from the information presented, but we encourage voters to look into the platforms on Indigenous issues that will impact their lives and their families in the coming years. We owe it to ourselves and to our children to ensure that our concerns are not left out or ignored anymore. By voting we take a pro-active approach, instead of having to react to bad policies down the road.”

Stay tuned in the coming weeks for a full rollout of the SCO voter awareness campaign.

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