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Cummins Opposes Tsawwassen Treaty Motion in Parliament

OTTAWA—Today in Parliament John Cummins Member of Parliament for Delta-Richmond East voted to oppose a Ways and Means Motion on the Tsawwassen Treaty.

He stated, “I would like the record to show that I am opposed to Ways and Means Motion No. 5, an act to give effect to the Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement and to make consequential amendments to other acts.”

The Tsawwassen Treaty legislation commits the federal government to spend money and contains taxation provisions. The rules of Parliament require that for such legislation to be introduced in Parliament, a Ways and Means Motion must first be passed.

With the passage of today’s Tsawwassen Treaty Ways and Means Motion, the government is free to introduce in Parliament legislation implementing the Tsawwassen Treaty and its side agreements. It is expected the legislation will be introduced tomorrow.

Immediately prior to the introduction of the legislation it is anticipated that the government will formally sign the Tsawwassen Treaty and certain of the associated side-agreements. Two of these side-agreements involve general taxation and fisheries.

There are a number of other side-agreements yet to be concluded. These include authority for the Band to levy and collect income tax from “non-citizen” residents of the Reserve and the authority to levy a First Nations GST to replace the existing federal GST.

The income tax agreement will allow the Band to keep all or a significant portion of the income taxes paid by the 500 “non-citizens” living on the Tsawwassen Reserve.

The GST agreement will allow the Band to keep all or virtually of the GST paid at any hotel, restaurant or store locating on the Reserve.

“The passage of the Ways and Means Motion today means that the tax provisions in the Treaty will now receive First Reading in Parliament tomorrow with the introduction of the Tsawwassen Treaty legislation,” said Cummins.

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