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Wednesday, March 24, 2021

Hiawatha First Nation supports Cileana Taylor's family and Curve Lake First Nation in their call to action, and calls on the Peterborough Police Service to increase the charges against Jordan Morin. The charge of aggravated assault is not enough when one of our young Indigenous women has died from his violent assault. We call on the Peterborough Police Services to increase the charges to homicide and in doing so, we call on the Crown Attorney to prosecute Mr. Morin for that homicide while pursuing justice through the courts.

Today, Mr. Morin walks free. Having violated his bail conditions at least once with a recent assault on another young woman. Our Hiawatha First Nation women do not feel safe. Indigenous women do not feel safe. No one should feel safe with a violent offender out on bail who has been convicted of a previous assault in 2019 (prior to the assault on Cileana) amongst other charges. Hiawatha First Nation would certainly prefer that he not be walking free, or able to enter our First Nation or anyone's Community. We hope he receives the message that he is not welcome on our First Nation or in our Michi Saagiig and Williams Treaties Territory.

Our community has supported Cileana's family and Curve Lake First Nation through prayers and offerings as they sat with Cileana in the hospital, and after her death. Cileana, as all our Indigenous women are sacred and a part of the continuation of life for our people, our culture and our traditions. They are the link, and the connection to our future generations.

Throughout the history of Canada, both the Crown and the Church have called for violence against Indigenous women. One of the early tenets set out in letters between government and church officials was a recognition that Indigenous women enjoyed too much respect from Indigenous men. These letters detail the intentional subversion of this respect and a policy of teaching Indigenous men that women were possessions to be controlled through violence.

Today we see the impacts of this – the Crown has, for too long, treated Indigenous women as expendable. Cileana had value. Cileana had a full life ahead of her. The loss of Cileana's life is unacceptable to our First Nation, to all our Peoples and to human kind.

Today, Hiawatha First Nation calls on the Police and the Crown to change the policy, to be a part of turning the course of Canadian history, and to demonstrate to the world that violence against Indigenous women is **NEVER** acceptable. Today, and always, we stand with Cileana's family and with Curve Lake First Nation to let the world know that Cileana life is a loss that must be accounted for.

Chief Laurie Carr  
On behalf of Hiawatha First Nation Council