



## TŜILHQOT'IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

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Media Release  
May 8, 2019

### **Tsilhqot'in supports the decision to remove Judge Matthew Begbie Statue in New Westminster**

**Williams Lake, BC** (May 8, 2019): The Tsilhqot'in National Government approves of New Westminster City Council's decision to remove the statue of Judge Matthew Begbie from its provincial courthouse.

In October 1864, Judge Begbie wrongfully convicted six Tsilhqot'in War Chiefs of murder and sentenced them to death by hanging in one of the largest mass executions in Canadian history. Both provincial and federal governments have exonerated the six War Chiefs of any crime or wrongdoing and recognized the six War Chiefs as heroes of the Tsilhqot'in people.

The history here only sheds light to a negative relationship between First Nations and colonizers. Removing the statue of Judge Begbie allows for healing and reconciliation to take place for Tsilhqot'in communities. Furthermore, it reflects an era of cultural understanding and appreciation for the Tsilhqot'in and all Indigenous peoples.

#### **Quotes:**

#### **Chief Joe Alphonse, Tribal Chair, Tsilhqot'in National Government**

"From the Tsilhqot'in perspective, Judge Begbie represents a legacy of betrayal, pain and tragedy for our people. Removing Judge Begbie's statue from public spaces does not remove him from history, but rather recognizes *our* history and *our* experience as Indigenous peoples. We are grateful for the leadership shown by the New Westminster City Council and for the understanding and compassion for our people that this decision reflects."

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