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## Aboriginal Housing Management Association

*Over 30 years of Indigenous housing expertise*

For Immediate Release

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### **Red Dress Day: AHMA Calls for Urgent Action on Housing as a Lifeline for Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People**

**Unceded territories of the x̱w̱m̱əθḵw̱ə ʔəm (Musqueam), Sḵw̱w̱ wú7mesh (Squamish) and sə̱lilw̱ətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, known as Vancouver, BC** – On Red Dress Day, the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA) stands in remembrance of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people (MMIWG2S+) and calls for urgent, sustained action to address this ongoing national crisis.

Observed annually, May 5th is National Day of Awareness and Remembrance, honouring lives lost and raising awareness of the disproportionate violence faced by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people across Canada.

[AHMA's Indigenous Gender-Based Violence Housing Strategy](#) emphasizes that safe, affordable, and culturally appropriate housing is a critical and often overlooked part of the solution. Findings from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls identified housing insecurity as a structural driver of violence and positioned access to safe, culturally appropriate, and Indigenous-led housing as a core measure of prevention and justice.

“No person should ever have to choose between violence and homelessness,” said AHMA CEO, Margaret Pfoh.

#### **Housing as Prevention, Protection, and Healing**

[AHMA's Open Letter](#) highlights that Indigenous housing providers across British Columbia are actively working to create culturally safe environments rooted in community, dignity, and self-determination. These efforts align directly with the Calls for Justice from the *National Inquiry*, which demonstrate the need for increased investment in Indigenous-led housing solutions.

“On Red Dress Day, we honour the generations of Indigenous women whose advocacy named the violence long before it was acknowledged, and whose leadership continues to guide the

calls for justice, safety, and systemic change,” said AHMA’s GBV Policy Analyst, Terri Fortune. “Without access to affordable, culturally safe housing, Indigenous women and gender-diverse people are left with few safe options, increasing their vulnerability to violence.”

### **A Call to Governments and Partners**

On this Red Dress Day, AHMA is calling on all levels of government to:

- Accelerate investments in Indigenous housing across urban, rural, and northern communities
- Support Indigenous-led housing strategies and service delivery
- Fully implement the Calls for Justice from the *National Inquiry*
- Recognize housing as essential infrastructure in preventing gender-based violence

Despite growing awareness, violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people remains a national crisis rooted in systemic factors including colonialism, racism, and inequitable access to services.

### **Honouring Lives, Advancing Change**

Red dresses displayed in communities across the country serve as powerful symbols of loss, remembrance, and a call to action.

AHMA joins Indigenous communities, families, and advocates in honouring those whose lives have been cut short while reaffirming our commitment to advancing safe, sustainable, and culturally appropriate housing as part of the broader movement for justice.

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### **About AHMA**

The Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA) has 30 years of expertise in advancing housing rights for Indigenous Peoples. We are Canada’s first *For Indigenous, By Indigenous* housing authority. AHMA members manage over 95% of all Indigenous housing units located off reserve in BC, and AHMA administers funds for over 10,000 Indigenous individuals and families living in urban, rural, and northern parts of the province. We also advocate broadly for Indigenous housing, provide operational guidance, conduct research, support asset management, and much more.