

## Statutory Declaration

I, Bearskin, Sarah, 420 Squirrel Road, Chisasibi, 1954-02-26

(Name, first name, address, birth date)

I solemnly declare, meeting with Marie-Andrée Roy, investigation agent from the Viens Inquiry, on May 28, 2018, in Chisasibi, that,

Q1: We were talking about the issues that you had going to the Espresso hotel in Montreal.

A1: Yes. When I go to Montreal for my appointments, we get our meal tickets from the Cree Health Board. The Espresso Hotel gives us the tickets when we arrive. But I have problems with the food at this hotel: it's too spicy. We did try to tell the cook that I can't eat spicy food but nothing changed. I have a health problem: I have something growing in my stomach and I have a heart problem so I can't eat spicy food. When I try to have breakfast there, I throw up. I can only eat my own food now and I can't eat eggs anymore. Not because I can't eat but I want to throw up when I eat them. That started at the Espresso Hotel 3 years ago. Since I don't eat very much, my blood cells are low and I have to get blood transfusions almost every week. But if I buy my own food, I won't be refunded.

You have to be a long-term patient to get a check so you can buy your own groceries but me, I'm usually there for a couple of days. Sometimes I end up at the hospital and I'm almost there for two weeks. So, in the meantime, my escort gets nothing but the hotel's meal tickets.

But there's a lot of patients that go there and they are not on long-term and I'm one of them. If I'm there for over two weeks, it's because I end up in the hospital. The food at the hospital is much better than the hotel. They have all kinds of different foods and it's not spicy. But then, I have to buy food for my escorts. My income is only old age pensions and with the little money that I have, I try to spread it out so they can get their meals but that's not very much. I have to take care of my children and grandchildren and I buy groceries for them. If we don't go hunting, we don't have anything to eat. So that's why I can't save my money for the nurse appointments.

The restaurant opens at 7:00 and we leave before 7, so my escorts can't eat. When we're at the hospital, first I have my blood test. Then I have to wait for the results and I see the doctor. That's 3 hours. And then, at 1:00, it's my dialysis. I have to go to another hospital. I already told them that 2 or three appointments in one day, that's too much for me. But they did something about it and they told me that there would be no more 2 or 3 appointments and that from now on, I'll have just one appointment.

This has been going on for years now, not just this year. I'm the beneficiary with the James Bay agreement and the Cree Health Board is supposed to be taking care of us. When they see that there is no money, it's always the patient that has to sacrifice. It is not the management. Something has to be done.

Q2: Did you ever make a complaint?

Declarer signature \_\_\_\_\_

Declared before me, Marie-Andrée Roy

at Chisasibi on May 24, 2018

Commission d'enquête sur les relations entre les Autochtones et certains services publics

La présente déclaration statutaire a été présentée par : téléphone

courriel  courrier  en personne  à monsieur/madame

Sarah Bearskin qui nous confirme  
que son contenu correspond bel et bien à ce qu'il/qu'elle nous a  
rapporté(e) en date du 24 mai 2018.

Signature du déclarant : M. Andree Roy

Date : 9 sept. 2018

A2: I made complaints to Sarah Cowboy and I told her I was going to the Commission about my meal tickets. She didn't say anything and she just told me that they were going to give me my meal tickets and that they already prepared them. But I think they were sitting on somebody's desk.

Q3: When is the first time you met with Sarah Cowboy regarding your issues with your meal tickets?

A3: A year ago. At that time, they were still reimbursing our meal tickets and they were giving us money. And then, all of a sudden, I think it was in April, they said they were not reimbursing the tickets at all.

Q4: Is there a specific person at the Cree Patients Services that is responsible for organizing your appointments, giving you your meal tickets, or to refunding you?

A4: No, it's not always the same. They keep changing. If I have any problem, I call the dialysis nurse but that's recent. There's nobody to call. And they don't believe you if you say there's something wrong with the food and that I'm throwing up.

Q5: Do the Cree Patient Services know that you have a particular diet to follow?

A5: I think they are aware for the dialysis patients. They're aware that certain patients have certain diets... But they don't really look at that, they don't really look at those diets.

Q6: Do you have any suggestions for us, to improve the services?

A6: Like I said before, they know the patients—cancer patients, dialysis patients, diabetic patients and they should keep a close eye on those. We need to eat properly. All patients should have the right to get their money so they can buy their food, so they can eat what they want. That's my suggestion. We shouldn't pay the price for other people's mistakes. Everybody suffers because a few people don't spend their money well. I'm the beneficiary of the James Bay Agreement and the Cree Health Board is supposed to be taking care of us. When they say there's no money, it's always the patients that have to sacrifice, it is not management. Something has to be done.

x LIOR

Enquêteur

x \_\_\_\_\_

Déclarant