



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

Honourable John Horgan, MLA
Premier of British Columbia
West Annex
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC
V8V 1X4

May 5, 2020

Dear Premier:

On behalf of the BC Liberal Official Opposition, I want to reaffirm our continued support of the provincial government's efforts to contain the COVID-19 virus and keep British Columbians as safe as possible. The health impacts of this virus have been devastating for many families, and our hearts are with all of those who have lost a loved one as a result of this pandemic.

The effort to combat this virus has truly been an all-in effort by British Columbians, who deserve our gratitude for the sacrifices they have made to help flatten the curve. Our front-line health professionals, and essential service workers like transit drivers and grocery store staff, deserve our special thanks for the incredible sacrifices they are making, day in and day out, on behalf of us all.

The tireless efforts of Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry, Minister of Health Adrian Dix, and their respective teams deserve our gratitude too. As your government prepares to introduce its re-opening plan this week, it is critical that your plan clearly defines a path out of the current restrictions.

The Official Opposition is calling on government to include the following actions as part of the economic recovery plan and ensure that we get B.C. on a trajectory to restore economic activity and get British Columbians back to work while at the same time keeping British Columbians as safe as possible:

- Establish an increased testing and monitoring plan to ensure we remain in control of the ongoing COVID-19 public health threat;
- Develop and release a transparent pandemic management plan, including a long-term procurement strategy for health supplies and PPE;
- Establish a timely review process for sector-by-sector re-opening plans developed by the private sector, including timelines;
- Launch a B.C. is Back economic growth and job creation plan for British Columbians, to include:
 - a 60-90-day holiday on Provincial Sales Tax, Hotel Tax and EHT;
 - a short-term commercial rent relief plan that includes a no-eviction backstop to help small businesses, particularly retailers, who have seen a significant loss of revenue;
 - an increase in our tourism marketing budget to attract visitors when it is safe to do so;
 - a rural B.C.-specific strategy that helps position rural B.C. for post COVID-19 prosperity; and

BC Liberal Official Opposition
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4
T: 250-356-6171



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

- a moratorium on new regulations and policies that would add costs for B.C. businesses.

The people of British Columbia have been rightfully focused on what they can do to support government in our collective efforts to combat COVID-19. But they are also growing more and more concerned about how they will deal with the economic devastation that looms ahead.

Keeping British Columbians safe remains priority number one, but effectively communicating how government will lead economic recovery is critical as we navigate through this challenging time. British Columbians deserve no less.

The challenge in front of us may well be more difficult than fighting the virus itself. We are now in a deep recession, hundreds of thousands of people are out of work, businesses are in peril, and students are likely not back in school until the fall.

Now is the time to be bold and brave.

Sincerely,

Andrew Wilkinson, Q.C., MLA
Leader of the Official Opposition