



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

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

**June 16, 2020**

Dear Premier,

British Columbians were stunned to see that May was the deadliest month in our province's history for drug deaths — 170 of our citizens died in a single month from opioid overdoses. This opioid crisis is wreaking havoc on families and communities in every corner of our province and it is more urgent than ever that your government take major steps to reverse this tragic epidemic.

Saving lives from overdoses is vital, but it's only the first step — reversing an overdose makes it possible for a person to start down a pathway to getting off drugs, but your government has not shown the will to take up this urgent challenge. A number of steps are urgently needed because we can do better:

1. British Columbia desperately needs a ministry properly equipped to handle this issue — your approach is a ministry with the smallest annual budget of any ministry — less than the sum spent by the Ministry of Health every four hours.
2. British Columbia needs a prescription drug monitoring program to help prevent cases of addiction in the first place.
3. Your government must fund proper scientific clinical trials related to the safe supply program to determine what actually works — just like any other medical intervention, it must be properly and publicly assessed and disclosed to scientific standards.
4. People who are addicted need a pathway to recovery — something that Alberta spends \$180 million per year on and something that your government spends almost nothing on. This is a shameful demonstration of indifference to the plight of people trying to end their addiction.

More than ever, the government of British Columbia needs to step up its response to this crisis, repair the gaps in the system exposed by the pandemic, and invest in further treatment and recovery options. This issue touches every community and, as Leader of the Official Opposition, it's my responsibility to all British Columbians to convince you to take real steps to bring this crisis to an end.

The heartbreak and death must stop.

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BC Liberal Official Opposition  
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Victoria, BC V8V 1X4



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Sincerely,

Andrew Wilkinson, Q.C.

MLA, Vancouver-Quilchena  
Leader of the Official Opposition

Jane Thornthwaite

MLA, North Vancouver-Seymour  
Official Opposition Critic for Mental Health and Addictions