



July 30, 2018

Via Email: ENV.minister@gov.bc.ca
(Original to follow by mail)

Honourable George Heyman
Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
PO Box 9047 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

RE: BC Environmental Assessment Revitalization Discussion Paper

Dear Minister,

The Business Council appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the *Discussion Paper* based on engagement to date in the province's review of B.C.'s environmental assessment (EA) process. We have benefited from direct conversations with EAO officials and look forward to continuing this productive dialogue. We are ready to work with your Ministry to seek practical solutions to issues involving EA that recognize the competitive realities of the province's export industries and support continuous incremental improvement.

Our submission reiterates a number of points that have been shared with Ministry officials in face-to-face meetings. As you know, the Business Council has significant concerns with both the pace of the EA review process and the scope of the issues being addressed. In part, this reflects the fact that large segments of the business community are being overwhelmed by multiple policy and regulatory reviews and legislative changes currently underway or recently completed in B.C. as well as nationally across a range of policy areas – including environmental assessment, energy regulation, various aspects of climate change policy, professional reliance, labour legislation, occupational health and safety matters, minimum wages, payroll taxes, housing policy, and the regulation of natural resource industries.

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The Business Council supports balanced adjustments to existing environmental legislation and regulations, aimed at improving efficiency, enabling appropriate Indigenous and stakeholder participation, and reducing costs. It is important to note that B.C.'s environmental assessment process is not broken, nor is the province in the middle of an environmental crisis that calls for wholesale change to a project assessment regime that, overall, has worked well. We believe the EA "revitalization" process launched by the government overlooks the strengths of the existing regime. Regardless of the concerns highlighted in the attached submission, we are ready to work with your officials to develop sensible modifications to the current legislation and regulations.

Your sincerely,

Original signed by
Greg D'Avignon

Greg D'Avignon
President and Chief Executive Officer

Original signed by
Jock Finlayson

Jock Finlayson
Executive VP and Chief Policy Officer

DM/vjc
Attach.

cc: Kevin Jardine, Associate Deputy Minister, Environmental Assessment Office
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