



# Interior Health

*Every person matters*

June 15, 2018

Nathan Braun  
Executive Project Director  
Environmental Assessment Office

sent via e-mail to [Nathan.braun@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Nathan.braun@gov.bc.ca)

Dear Ms. Stockman,

**Re: Environmental Assessment Office Revitalization**

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to the Environmental Assessment Office's (EAO) Revitalization process. We understand the EAO will be releasing a discussion paper based on outcomes from the different engagement meetings and recommendations of the Environmental Assessment Advisory Committee. Based on our experience and the focus on human health impacts we have three key recommendations for consideration:

**1. Broaden the scope of the human health component**

The human health component of an Environmental Assessment as currently weighted is narrow in scope. Assessments should include more rigor and sensitivity to the economic and social impacts on local populations, and be inclusive of indigenous perspectives on health and wellbeing.

**2. Increase capacity to support a broader human health assessment**

To ensure success, the Environmental Assessment Office's expectations of a health authority should be relative its available resources. For larger projects and proposals, short or long-term surge capacity should be considered and negotiated prior to the request for health authority input.

**3. Increase the neutrality and transparency of the process**

The location of the overseeing agency is critical to the creation of a completely independent process and outcome. Ideally, the Environmental Assessment Office would be located at arm's length from both government and industry. The creation of a new independent Environmental Assessment Office would provide the resources and expertise to clearly define the questions, outcomes and assessment needed from a human health perspective. Additional separation from the consultant and proponent is critical for transparency, decision-making and increasing public confidence in the Environmental Assessment process.

We look forward to further engagement with the Environmental Assessment Office about the revitalization process and re-development of the *Environmental Assessment Act*. Interior Health will provide comments on the upcoming discussion paper specific to the Interior Health region.

Respectfully,

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