



December 7, 2022

Honourable Murray Rankin  
Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Rankin:

Thank you for agreeing to continue to serve as Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation. I trust in your leadership at this critical time to deliver results for the people of British Columbia.

British Columbians continue to recover from and respond to the upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate related natural disasters, while global inflation is driving up costs for more households and the world's economic outlook is concerning. Now more than ever, we need to focus on building a secure, low emission, sustainable economy, and a province where everyone can find a good home – whether you live in a rural area, in a city, or in an Indigenous community. We will continue working toward true and meaningful reconciliation by supporting opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be full partners in the inclusive and sustainable province we are building together.

Our government is committed to delivering on the mandate British Columbians gave us in 2020. Together we can make life better for people in B.C., improve the services we all rely on, and ensure a sustainable province for future generations.

As we renew our work, my priority as Premier is to deliver results that people can see and feel in four key areas:

- **Attainable and affordable housing:** In the wake of soaring prices and record migration to B.C., we will take on the important work of building new homes that are actually attainable for the middle class, while continuing our work to address the housing crisis for those in distress on our streets.

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- **Safer communities:** To address concerns about public safety, both for the people struggling with mental health and addiction on our streets, as well as the feeling that downtown centres are not as safe as they were before the pandemic, we will work with our partners at all levels of government, the justice and health care systems, the non-profit sector, and community leaders to find solutions for this complex challenge facing our province, and work overtime to seize the assets of high-level criminals.
- **Improved health care:** Amid unprecedented pressures we will continue to work to strengthen our public health care system, from family doctors to new hospitals, so care is there for each of us when we need it.
- **A sustainable, clean, secure, and fair economy:** We will continue our work investing in British Columbians, fighting racism and promoting equity, and building a clean economy that addresses our obligations to combat climate change by driving down emissions, while creating good, family supporting jobs.

Our historic partnership with First Nations leadership to pass the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into law domestically in British Columbia was groundbreaking – but it was also just the beginning of the journey and work with Indigenous Peoples in our province.

The Action Plan for the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, along with innovative, true, and meaningful reconciliation initiatives with rights and title holders across the province, will be how we will bring to life our commitments under this remarkable legislation in ways that the entire province can see, touch, and feel in their daily lives.

Reconciliation is a shared responsibility and partnerships between all levels of government have the real potential to improve life in communities across the province for everyone. Nobody wins with the uncertainty, enforced poverty, racism, and trauma that comes from our province's shameful history with Indigenous Peoples. The costs of not acknowledging that history are carried not only by Indigenous Peoples, but by all British Columbians.

By resetting our relationships as true partnerships and by recognizing and supporting the jurisdiction and self-determination of Indigenous Peoples to govern their own lives, we ensure Indigenous governments have the resources to deliver services to their communities. Not only can we move forward, we can build a stronger and more prosperous future not just for Indigenous Peoples, but for all British Columbians.

Since 2020, our government has made considerable progress on important initiatives including:

- Establishing the new Declaration Act Secretariat and delivering the Action Plan required under the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.
- Making progress in moving from transactional arrangements to long-term agreements with Indigenous Peoples that support reconciliation.
- Delivering new provincial funding to support and strengthen work to reclaim and revitalize Indigenous cultures, arts, heritage, and First Nations languages.

As you continue to make progress on items in your previous mandate letter, over the remaining period of this mandate I expect you to prioritize making progress on the following:

- Lead work across ministries to implement the *Declaration Act* Action Plan in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples, including reporting annually on progress.
- Through the new *Declaration Act* Secretariat, continue to ensure new legislation and policies are consistent with the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.
- Continue to improve our government's relationships with Indigenous Peoples by moving from short-term transactional arrangements to long-term agreements that recognize and support reconciliation, shared decision-making, self-determination, and economic independence, including advancing work to co-develop the new distinctions-based fiscal relationship with Indigenous Peoples.
- In collaboration with First Nations and with support from the Minister of Housing, lead work to bring the federal government to the table to match our funding to build much-needed housing for Indigenous Peoples both on and off reserve.
- Propose steps to continue increasing the capacity of all ministries to advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.
- Support ministries to implement agreements under Sections 6 and 7 of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* that enable shared statutory decision-making authority, and advance the recognition of First Nations self-determination and Indigenous laws.
- Support the Public Service Agency to increase recruitment and retention of Indigenous Peoples in the public service.

Our work together must continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of people in this province. Issues not contemplated by this letter will come forward for government action and I ask you to bring such matters forward for consideration by the Planning and Priorities Committee of Cabinet, with the expectation that any proposed initiatives will be subject to the usual Cabinet and Treasury Board oversight and include measurable outcomes for British Columbians. Your ministry's priorities must reflect our government's overall strategic plan as determined by Cabinet.

British Columbians expect their elected representatives to work together to advance the public good. That means seeking out, fostering, and championing good ideas regardless of their origin. I expect you to reach out to elected members from all parties as you deliver on your mandate. Further, you will build thoughtful and sustained relationships both with title holders and through public and stakeholder engagement plans that incorporate diverse perspectives early in the policy development process. Federal partnerships and resources will be particularly important and, on behalf of our government, you will engage with the federal government on advancing priorities to improve the lives of British Columbians.

As a Cabinet, we will uphold the highest standards of ethics, collaboration, and good conduct in service of the public, and as a Minister of the Crown, you are expected to review, understand, and act according to the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act*. You will establish a collaborative working relationship with your Deputy Minister, and the public servants under their direction, who provide the professional, non-partisan advice that is fundamental to delivering on our government's priorities. Your Minister's Office must meet the highest standards for integrity and provide a respectful, rewarding environment for all staff.

The rural and urban challenges that we face are urgent and complex. In response, we must be forward-thinking, strategic, and ready to work across disciplines and old divisions in new ways. Labour shortages are a major issue globally, and British Columbia is no exception, including in the public service. Maintaining the BC Public Service as an employer of excellence will be key to retaining and recruiting the diverse professionals we rely on to deliver essential services, advice, and analysis.

At the core of this work is listening and responding to the priorities of people in B.C. Together, we can deliver results in very real ways – ways that people can see, feel, and touch, and that change their lives for the better. Thank you for doing this important work with me.

Sincerely,



David Eby, KC  
Premier