



November 26, 2020

Honourable Ravi Kahlon
Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Kahlon:

Thank you for agreeing to serve British Columbians as Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation. You are taking on this responsibility at a time when people in our province face significant challenges as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 has turned the lives of British Columbians upside down. None of us expected to face the challenges of the past number of months, yet British Columbians have demonstrated incredible resilience, time and time again. We will get through the pandemic and its aftereffects by building on this resilience and focusing on what matters most to people.

British Columbians voted for a government focused on their priorities: fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, providing better health care for people and families, delivering affordability and security in our communities, and investing in good jobs and livelihoods in a clean-energy future.

I expect you – and the work of your ministry – to focus on the commitments detailed in our platform, *Working for You*, along with the following foundational principles:

- **Putting people first:** Since 2017, our government has focused on making decisions to meet people's needs. That focus drove our work in our first term and will continue to be our priority. British Columbians are counting on the government to keep them safe and to build an economic recovery that works for everyone, not just those at the top. Keeping people at the centre of everything we do means protecting and enhancing the public services people rely on and working to make life more affordable for everyone.
- **Lasting and meaningful reconciliation:** Reconciliation is an ongoing process and a shared responsibility for us all. The unanimous passage of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* was a significant step forward in this journey. True

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reconciliation will take time and ongoing commitment to work with Indigenous peoples as they move toward self-determination. Our government – and every ministry – must remain focused on creating opportunities for Indigenous peoples to be full partners in our economy and providing a clear and sustainable path for everyone to work toward lasting reconciliation.

- **Equity and anti-racism:** Our province's history, identity and strength are rooted in its diverse population. Yet racialized and marginalized people face historic and present-day barriers that limit their full participation in their communities, workplaces, government and their lives. Our government has a moral and ethical responsibility to tackle systemic discrimination in all its forms – and every ministry has a role in this work. While our caucus elected a record number of women, more work remains to address gender equity. Delivering on our commitments to address racial discrimination will require a commitment by all of government to ensure increased IBPOC (Indigenous, Black and People of Colour) representation within the public service, including in government appointments. Our efforts to address systemic discrimination must also inform policy and budget decisions by reviewing all decisions through a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens.
- **A better future through fighting climate change:** In 2018, our government launched our CleanBC climate action plan. CleanBC puts British Columbia on the path to a cleaner, better future by building a low-carbon economy with new clean-energy jobs and opportunities, protecting our air, land and water and supporting communities to prepare for climate impacts. It is every Minister's responsibility to ensure your ministry's work continues to achieve CleanBC's goals.
- **A strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone:** We will continue our work to support British Columbians through the pandemic and the economic recovery by investing in health care, getting people back to work, helping businesses and communities, and building the clean, innovative economy of the future. Our plan will train the workforce of tomorrow, help businesses hire and grow and invest in the infrastructure needed to build our province.

The pandemic has reminded us that we're strongest when we work together. Delivering on our commitments to people will require a coordinated effort with your cabinet and caucus colleagues, supported by the skilled professionals in the public service. You will also support your cabinet colleagues to do their work, particularly where commitments cross ministry lines.

British Columbians expect their elected representatives to work together to advance the broader public good despite their partisan perspectives. 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 through public and stakeholder engagement plans that connect with people to incorporate their perspectives early in the policy development process. These plans must include measurable outcomes and ensure active dialogue and ongoing outreach in your ministry's actions and priorities.

Over the course of our mandate, I expect you will make progress on the following items:

- Support people and businesses in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic by continuing to deliver initiatives that will directly support small businesses and build an inclusive economic recovery across B.C.
- Work across ministries to lead the development and coordinate implementation of an industrial and manufacturing strategy that generates cleaner, more innovative, value-added economic activity across B.C., while supporting our commitments to reconciliation and CleanBC.
- With support from the Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation, boost B.C. as a global exporter of climate solutions by investing in B.C.-based carbon capture and storage and other low carbon technologies.
- Support the work of the Minister of State for Trade on special projects to support economic development, trade and innovation in areas such as B.C.'s shipbuilding sector, aerospace and forest sector innovation.
- Support B.C. shipyards to build capacity and become increasingly competitive with investments to support more shipbuilding, refit, repair, and maintenance here in B.C.
- Capitalize on the potential of B.C.'s aerospace industry by expanding support for B.C. companies to integrate into global supply chains and access new markets.
- Launch a strategic investment fund to support our government's objective of building a more innovative low-carbon economy by investing in high-potential B.C. businesses to help them scale up and grow here.
- Lead the Office of Mass Timber Implementation and, with support from the Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, advance the mass timber action plan.
- Work to expand on the investment that our economic recovery plan, StrongerBC, is making for people pursuing online courses to re-skill for the digital economy.
- With support from the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training, work with B.C.'s Innovation Commissioner to lead investment in innovation clusters, with a focus on emerging industries where B.C. companies have developed the early lead – such as life sciences, emergency management technology, engineered wood, clean tech, artificial intelligence, and quantum and virtual reality technologies.
- Support the work of the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries to move forward with the recommendations of the Food Security Task Force and develop a new Regenerative Agricultural Network, which will create jobs for workers, opportunities for farmers and greater food security by bringing together natural systems of production with agri-technologies that enhance production.

To assist you in meeting the commitments we have made to British Columbians, you are assigned a Parliamentary Secretary for Technology and Innovation. You will work closely together and ensure your Parliamentary Secretary receives appropriate support to deliver on the following priorities, outlined in the mandate letter issued to them:

- Develop an intellectual property strategy to support more innovation and commercialization by B.C. companies, including a First Patent Program.
- Help more people from underrepresented groups get their first job in the tech sector, while simultaneously helping B.C.-based tech companies hire and grow, by increasing the number of Innovator Skills Initiative Grants and prioritizing placements for women, Indigenous people, people of colour and others currently underrepresented in B.C.'s tech sector.
- Help more innovative B.C. businesses successfully scale up here by expanding the successful RevUp program that brings business owners together with experienced mentors who provide coaching and advice on growing small successful tech companies into larger ones.

Our work as a government must continually evolve to meet the changing needs of people in this province. Issues not contemplated in 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. Your ministry's priorities must reflect our government's overall strategic plan as determined by cabinet.

All cabinet members are expected to review, understand, and act according to the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act* and conduct themselves with the highest level of integrity. As a minister of the Crown, your conduct will reflect not only on you but on cabinet and our government. You are responsible for providing strong, professional and ethical leadership within cabinet and your ministry. 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. You must ensure your minister's office meets the highest standards for integrity and provides a respectful and rewarding environment for all staff.

My commitment to all British Columbians is to do my level best to make sure people's lives are better, safer and more affordable. I believe the challenges we face can and will be overcome by working together. By way of this letter, I am expressing my faith that people can expect the same commitment from you.

Sincerely,



John Horgan
Premier