



November 26, 2020

Honourable Selina Robinson
Minister of Finance
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Robinson:

Thank you for agreeing to serve British Columbians as Minister of Finance. 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:

- Invest in the economic recovery of our province from the COVID-19 pandemic, including by continuing to make the investments needed to support people and businesses, and ensuring the successful implementation of StrongerBC.
- As soon as possible, provide immediate relief for people by delivering a one-time Recovery Benefit.
- Introduce an income-tested renter's rebate to support rental households that need it most and are not already receiving other rental support.
- Launch a new Recovery Investment Fund to deliver an additional 1% of GDP each year in capital projects, above and beyond our existing capital commitments, to drive new growth and investment, including funding new schools, hospitals, child care spaces, roads and transit, and more.
- With support from the Parliamentary Secretary for Anti-Racism, lead efforts to support increased IBPOC (Indigenous, Black and People of Colour) representation within government and set targets for IBPOC representation in the public sector.
- Enhance the Treasury Board capital review process to ensure that public projects deliver on the priorities of government, including ensuring that projects are assessed based on their ability to, where possible, provide opportunities to create new child care spaces, use mass timber, include Community Benefit Agreements and assist in meeting our CleanBC targets.
- As our province moves ahead with a strong stimulus and recovery plan, and people and businesses are back on their feet, ensure the implementation of budget policies to keep B.C. fiscally sound over the long run.
- Establish a Crown agencies secretariat.
- Re-establish the government-film sector task force to recommend the size and term of a new visual effects tax credit based on production costs, with support from the Parliamentary Secretary for Arts and Film.
- Help more people make the switch to active transportation by removing the PST on e-bikes to make them more affordable.
- Assume responsibility for property assessment, including oversight of BC Assessment.
- With support from the Attorney General and Minister responsible for Housing, control the rising cost of strata insurance by building on work already done to close loopholes and enhance regulatory powers and acting on the forthcoming final report of the BC Financial Services Authority. If rates have not corrected by the end of 2021, explore a public strata insurance option.

- Work with the Minister of Municipal Affairs to continue work to provide relief for commercial tenants with triple-net leases who are paying high property taxes.
- With support of the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, work to provide effective governance and oversight of the British Columbia Lottery Corporation.
- Support the Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation to require realtors to provide energy efficiency information on listed homes to incent energy-saving upgrades and let purchasers know what energy bills they will face.
- Support the work of the Minister of Municipal Affairs to bring down the cost of housing for people by streamlining and modernizing housing construction and approvals.

To assist you in meeting the commitments we have made to British Columbians, you are assigned a Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equity. 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:

- Ensure our government's commitment to gender equality is reflected in our budgets, policies and programs.
- Act as the government's liaison with feminist and women's organizations, and other organizations concerned with gender equality and the advancement of women.
- With support from the Minister of Labour, lead work to close the gender pay gap by continuing to address systemic discrimination in the workplace and moving closer to equal pay for equal work through new pay transparency legislation.
- With support from the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, lead work to develop an action plan to end gender-based violence, including minimum standards for sexual assault response, more training for police, crown council and justices, and establishing core funding for sexual assault centres.

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