

October 16, 2017

Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services  
c/o Parliamentary Committees Office  
Room 224, Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Email: FinanceCommittee@leg.bc.ca



E-B Strategy

Dear committee members:

E-B Strategy is a Vancouver-based consulting and workshop facilitation company. E-B Strategy focuses on organizational design, stakeholder engagement and workplace health and wellness. Some recent presentations were as the keynote speaker at the 2015 Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations annual convention, and presenting poverty reduction strategies to the House of Commons' Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities in February 2017.

Below are my recommendations for our 2018 provincial budget:

### Post-carbon energy infrastructure

1. Shift oil, gas, LNG and other carbon energy subsidies to green energy over 5 years, including solar, tidal, wind and geothermal. In consultation with industry, unions and post-secondary education institutions, begin a job retraining program for carbon energy workers into green energy development.
2. Develop no new hydro projects, but maximize output of existing hydro projects.
3. Direct BC Hydro to work with geothermal companies to develop geothermal energy, particularly for rural, remote and first nations communities with the goal of community energy self-sufficiency in 5-10 years.
4. Direct BC Hydro to begin developing solar, tidal and wind energy generation immediately.
5. Review run-of-the-river independent power projects for environmental and financial viability, considering the cost of energy and the amounts to be paid to the IPPs versus the power to be provided.
6. Direct BC Hydro to facilitate and help finance solar roadway and solar roof technology in urban and rural areas.
7. Ban the sale of fossil fuel vehicles by 2030. Direct ICBC to apply discounts for hybrid vehicles and larger discounts for electric vehicles. Become a Pacific Northwest leader in electric car battery re-use and recycling.
8. Ensure all new public buildings in BC have green or solar roofs. Ensure existing public buildings do so within 5-10 years.
9. Direct local government to amend building codes to require green or solar roofs.

## Co-operatives

1. Increase co-operative housing financing and renovation grants and zero-interest loans.
2. Work with the federal government to develop 5,000 units of new co-op housing over the next 5 years, particularly in areas in BC suffering from the housing crisis.
3. Create an incubation fund for worker co-operative startups.

## Food Security

1. The government must protect and expand the ALR to contribute to greater food security within BC, particularly in rural and remote regions.
2. The government must restore and promote the Buy BC program to create greater relationships between food consumers and producers in the province.

## Mental health

1. As an employer, the BC government must implement the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace for all public sector employees and government contractors. The government must take the lead to help create psychologically healthy and safe workplaces.
2. The government should also ensure that staff in all public sector workplaces in BC have Mental Health First Aid training.
3. BC should create a Centre of Excellence for Behavioural Epigenetics Research to attract talented researchers from around the world, and to apply epigenetic research developments to education, treatment and social programs in BC.

## Poverty reduction

1. BC must set a brisk timeline to achieve a \$15/hour minimum wage, with a steady path to achieving a living wage for workers.
2. Welfare and disability rates must continue to rise beyond the recent \$100/month increase. The government must commit to the [recommendations](#) from Raise the Rates:
  - a. *increase income assistance to the Market Basket Measure – about \$1,500 a month for single person on regular welfare*
  - b. *Remove the arbitrary barriers to receiving welfare*
  - c. *Raise earnings exemptions*
3. The government needs to restore and enhance tenants' rights advocacy with easy access for tenants to pursue complaints against landlords.

## Advanced education

1. BC must eliminate post-secondary tuition to be competitive with other countries that are educationally progressive and are already eliminating tuition fees. Free tuition will allow excellent students to have access to post-secondary education, particularly those who are now prevented from attending because of cost.

## Education

1. The K-12 education system has been systemically underfunded for most of this century to manufacture a crisis and create demand for private school spaces among families who could afford the tuition. BC must once again fully fund education costs, without punitive clawbacks like unfunded carbon tax costs.
2. The government must also phase out funding for private schools in BC.

## Transparency and accountability

1. The government must drastically expand the amount and nature of information that it and public bodies release through proactive disclosure. A review of consistent, popular annual, quarterly and monthly FOI requests will provide a reasonable starting point for discerning what kind of easy, valuable information that can be released without much difficulty.
2. FOI fees need to be eliminated, along with routine delays and extensions that public bodies impose.
3. The provincial government began posting on the internet the results of most FOI requests. Exemptions to public disclosure need to be reviewed and reduced. Other provincial public bodies in BC need to similarly disclose results of FOI requests.
4. Post all budget consultation submissions onto the government's website.

## Labour

1. In conjunction with the Indigenous Relations & Reconciliation, Education and Advanced Education ministries, the Labour ministry should help create useful labour studies curriculum to enhance BC students' understanding of their rights as employees, their responsibilities as employers and a rich awareness of the dynamics of the history of labour and worker rights in BC. Race, gender, class and other intersectional dynamics would naturally be a part of this curriculum.

Thank you for your consideration,

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