

Pamela Martin

Subject: FW: Recovery of municipal costs arising from climate change

From: Honourable <ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca>

Date: Wednesday, November 20, 2019 at 3:59 PM

To: "Lisa Helps (Mayor)" <LHelps@victoria.ca>

Cc: John Horgan <Premier@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: Recovery of municipal costs arising from climate change

Reference: 351460

November 20, 2019

Her Worship Mayor Lisa Helps
and Councillors
City of Victoria
Email: mayor@victoria.ca

Dear Mayor Helps and Council:

Thank you for your letter of October 1, 2019, addressed to the Honourable John Horgan, Premier, regarding legislation on the recovery of municipal costs arising from climate change. As your enquiry falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, I am pleased to respond on behalf of Premier Horgan and I apologize for the delay in doing so.

The Province recognizes the effort local governments are making to plan for the impacts of climate change on British Columbia's many communities, and I appreciate that you shared your request.

The Government of B.C. is committed to addressing the causes and managing the potential impacts of climate change on our province and its citizens. In December 2018, the Province released CleanBC, our pathway for B.C. to prosper economically and to meet our climate challenges, including carbon pollution reduction targets and the need to manage climate-related risks. CleanBC was developed in consultation with communities, Indigenous Peoples, local governments, labour, industry, environmental experts and academics. As you may know, Budget 2019 announced an investment of \$902 million over three years to implement CleanBC.

CleanBC is only the beginning of the Province's efforts to get B.C. back on track to climate leadership. The Climate Action Secretariat (CAS) has begun a province-wide climate risk assessment that will form the basis of our plan for a resilient province, recently releasing a [Preliminary Strategic Climate Risk Assessment](#). Over the coming year, CAS will be engaging local governments and others across B.C. to understand your concerns and seek your input on potential solutions as they continue to develop a new adaptation strategy for release in 2020.

The causes and solutions to climate change are many and complex. At this time, the Province is not considering legislation in relation to the recovery of municipal costs arising from climate change. We will continue to monitor actions and initiatives in other jurisdictions, including B.C. local governments. Instead, CleanBC focuses on how we will grow the use of clean and renewable energy in how we get around, heat our homes and fuel our industry with the intent of making things healthier and more affordable for people. The Province is also continuing the successful carbon pricing framework, with rebates for low- and middle-income British Columbians and support for clean investments.

In addition, the Province is working with B.C. industry to develop a new low carbon industrial strategy. We are also working with the natural gas sector to establish new rules to reduce methane emissions in the production of natural gas. As we develop a more comprehensive understanding of the potential future impacts of climate change on our infrastructure and communities, we will continue to collaborate with communities, local governments and industry, including fossil fuel producers, to find solutions.

Lastly, the *Climate Change Accountability Act* has set legislated targets to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 40 percent below 2007 levels by 2030, 60 percent by 2040, and 80 percent by 2050. In October 2019, “Bill 38: *Climate Change Accountability Amendment Act*” was tabled to provide better accountability, transparency and more detailed targets for climate action under the Act. If passed, amendments to the Act will strengthen public reporting on progress, add more comprehensive requirements for the public sector to manage climate risks, give the Minister the regulatory authority to set targets and standards for public sector buildings and fleets, enshrine an independent advisory council into law, and will require the Minister to set sectoral and interim targets following engagement with stakeholders.

Thank you again for taking the time to write and for sharing your request with us.

Sincerely,

George Heyman
Minister

cc: Honourable John Horgan, Premier