

February 6, 2018

Ref: 194311

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

Dear Mayor Helps and Council:

Thank you for your letter of December 7, 2017, addressed to the Honourable John Horgan, Premier, regarding your support for the creation of a 'British Columbians with Disabilities Act,' as proposed by Barrier-Free BC. Your correspondence has been forwarded to the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, and as Minister, I am pleased to respond on behalf of Premier Horgan.

I want to thank you for your advocacy on behalf of all persons with disabilities in British Columbia. I recognize the importance of this issue and acknowledge that action is necessary.

Accessibility is an important part of my portfolio as Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, and our government is committed to building a better BC for people with disabilities, and making BC a truly inclusive place to live and work.

We've recently released the 2017 Progress Update that captures highlights and important milestones over the last year to make BC a better place for people with disabilities to live. This update is available at www.gov.bc.ca/accessibility.

With respect to specific made-in BC accessibility legislation, the Province is eagerly awaiting the federal legislation on disability, which is expected later this year. The Ministry will review the federal legislation once it is tabled. This will be critical to making decisions about how to address any approach for BC.

One of the most significant barriers for people with disabilities in British Columbia is poverty. To address this barrier, I am leading the development of a poverty reduction strategy that will help us build a better life for people of our province.

By focusing on removing barriers and providing support to enable full participation in our communities by people with disabilities, we are moving toward a more accessible and inclusive British Columbia.

Thank you again for writing and raising this issue. I appreciate hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Shane Simpson
Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

cc: Honourable John Horgan, Premier