

June 17, 2016

Mayor Lisa Helps
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria BC V8W 1P6

MAYOR'S OFFICE

JUN 22 2016

VICTORIA, B.C.

Dear Mayor Helps:

Re: 2015 Resolutions

At the 2015 UBCM Convention, your community sponsored a resolution that was grouped with the Section C – Part 2 resolutions (resolutions referred to other resolutions within the *Resolutions Book*).

Please find enclosed a copy of your resolution, the resolution to which your resolution was referred, as well as the provincial response to the latter.

I trust this information will be of assistance to you.

Please feel free to contact Reiko Tagami, Information and Resolutions Coordinator with any questions about this process.

Tel: 604 270 8226 ext. 115 E-mail: rtagami@ubcm.ca

Sincerely,



Chair Al Richmond
President

Enclosure

Whereas municipalities and regional districts are the governments nearest to people and the natural environment, and therefore share a deep concern for the welfare of the natural environment and understand that a healthy environment is inextricably linked to the health of individuals, families, future generations and communities;

And whereas fostering the environmental well-being of the community is a municipal purpose under section 7(d) of the Community Charter and a regional district purpose under section 2(d) of the Local Government Act:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province of British Columbia enact a provincial environmental bill of rights to fulfill the right of every resident to live in a healthy environment by ensuring access to information, public participation in decision making, and access to effective remedies, and without limitation to allow a resident to:

- comment on environmentally significant government proposals,
- ask a ministry or local government to review an existing law, policy, or program,
- ask a ministry, crown agency, or local government to investigate harm to the natural environment,
- appeal, or ask a ministry or local government to review, a decision under an enactment,
- propose a new law, regulation, policy, or program to protect the natural environment,
- use courts or tribunals to protect the environment, and
- have whistleblower protection.

Convention Decision: **Not Admitted for Debate**

Resolutions Committee Comments

Refer to resolution A5.

Whereas municipalities and regional districts are the government nearest to people and the natural environment, and therefore share a deep concern for the welfare of the natural environment and understand that a healthy environment is inextricably linked to the health of individuals, families, future generations and communities;

And whereas fostering the environmental well being of the community is a municipal purpose under section 7(d) of the Community Charter and regional district purpose under section 2(d) of the Local Government Act:

Therefore be it resolved that UBCM request that the Province of British Columbia enact a provincial environmental bill of rights that:

- a) recognizes the right of every resident to live in a healthy environment, including the right to clean air, clean water, clean food and vibrant ecosystems;
- b) provides for public participation in decision-making respecting the environment and access to environmental information;
- c) provides access to justice when environmental rights are infringed; and
- d) has whistle-blower protection.

Convention Decision: **Endorsed**

Provincial Response

Ministry of Environment

Government is strongly committed to maintaining a healthy environment for British Columbians. As noted in the Ministry of Environment Service Plan, protecting the environment, along with sustainable economic growth, are top government priorities.

The Ministry's position is that an environmental bill of rights is not needed in BC because the province's existing and continually evolving environmental and natural resource regulatory regimes protect the public interest. The government sets and enforces requirements, prohibitions and standards designed to protect public health and safety and the environment – the air, land, water and all other external conditions or influences under which humans, animals and plants live.