



September 4, 2013

Hon. Shirley Bond
Treasury Board of BC
1350 5th Avenue
Prince George, BC
V2L 3L4

Dear Minister:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Shirley", written over the word "Minister".

s12, s13, s16, s17

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Laurie", written in dark ink.

Laurie Throness, MLA
Chilliwack-Hope

SEP 09 2013

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October 1, 2013

Hon. Shirley Bond
Minister of Jobs, Tourism, & Skills Training Responsible for Labour
Room 137, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Minister's Office of:					
OCT 04 2013					
Min Sig. <input type="checkbox"/>	DM's Sig. <input type="checkbox"/>	Info/ File <input type="checkbox"/>	ADM Reply <input type="checkbox"/>	FYI <input type="checkbox"/>	
ROUTE TO:					

Dear Shirley,

Re: ***BC Natural Resource Forum ~ Our Resources-Our Future
January 22nd & 23rd, 2014 – Prince George BC***

On January 22nd and 23rd, 2014, I will be hosting the 11th annual BC Natural Resource Forum ("the Forum") in Prince George, British Columbia.


I would like to extend to you an invitation to be a keynote speaker at the Forum. We have appreciated you speaking in the past at previous Forums and hope that your schedule will allow you to do so again this year. As you know the Forum provides a significant opportunity for Government, First Nations and representatives of the Resource Sectors to gain insights and an awareness of the many opportunities that exist to develop positive relationships that deliver benefits and economic certainty.

Date: Wednesday, January 22nd, 2014
Time: 11:00 am
Location: Civic Centre, 808 Civic Plaza, Prince George, BC

As a Leader in the Province, I would ask you to share your views on the future of Education in relation to our Province's natural resource industry. Your speech would be about 20 minutes followed by five to ten minutes of time for questions.

Thank you for considering this request. Your participation will be a key to ensuring the success of the Forum and I look forward to your positive response. Please respond to my Prince George address or email mike.morris.mla@leg.bc.ca

Yours faithfully,


MIKE MORRIS, MLA
Prince George-Mackenzie

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**Province of
British Columbia**
Legislative Assembly



Laurie Throness, M.L.A.
Chilliwack-Hope

October 17, 2013

Hon. Shirley Bond
Minister of Labour
1350 5th Avenue
Prince George, BC
V2L 3L4

Dear Minister Bond,

I recently met with a constituent of mine who had a conflict with a former employee regarding wages.

Unable to resolve the conflict with his former employee on an informal basis, he availed himself of the adjudication process provided by your Ministry. There was a hearing, both sides presented evidence, and my constituent believes that the adjudicator took the side of the employee, judging against the employer. Believing that the employee lied, and dissatisfied with the outcome, my constituent took the next step provided, which was to appeal to the Employment Standards Tribunal. Once again he lost the case because it was based on the testimony provided in the first instance. The matter turned out to be costly to my constituent, and he feels unjustly treated.

My constituent had questions that I'd like to pass along to you. In particular, he was concerned that the adjudicator took handwritten notes rather than an audio recording of the session. This meant that the Tribunal was not presented with an objective account from which to make a further judgment, nor an account that could be properly cross-examined. I would point out that it would cost nothing with today's technology to record these sessions and store them in case they are appealed. Only the few that are appealed would ever need to be transcribed.

The second question of my constituent regarded the professionalism of the adjudicator. He was concerned that perhaps she was not qualified to do her job, so I'd like to ask for a list of the criteria by which adjudicators are chosen, so that the Government of BC can assure British Columbians that their disputes are adjudicated by those who are fully qualified to make these decisions.

Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

Laurie Throness

RECEIVED

JTI-2013-00235
Page 13 OCT 21 2013



NOV 29 2013

Ref: 101945

Mr. Laurie Throness, MLA
Chilliwack-Hope
10 – 7300 Vedder Road
Chilliwack BC V2R 4G6

Dear Colleague: *Laurie:*

Thank you for your letter of October 17, 2013, regarding the concerns of a constituent in relation to an experience under the employment standards system. As the Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour, I am pleased to respond.

The *Employment Standards Act* (the Act) provides a framework to ensure that employees in British Columbia receive at least basic standards of compensation and conditions of employment. The Director of Employment Standards possesses the statutory authority to interpret and apply the Act.

It is difficult for me to respond in the absence of specific facts about the case; however, even with the facts, the Employment Standards Branch is independent from government and I cannot intervene. I can assure you, however, that the Branch and its officers resolve disputes between employees and employers in a professional, unbiased, and effective manner. Where an adjudication of a dispute takes place, an employer may be found by the officer (adjudicator) to be in violation of the Act, which may have happened in your constituent's case. It also appears the constituent exercised his right to have the Branch's decision reviewed by the Employment Standards Tribunal. While I understand the constituent is unhappy with the result of the adjudication, any flaws in the process or interpretation of the Act applied by the officer in making her decision would have been identified and remedied by the Employment Standards Tribunal.

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Mr. Throness

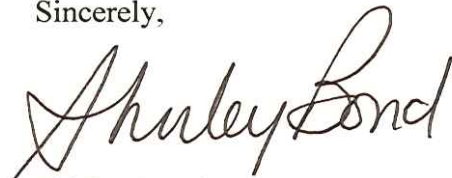
Page 2

In response to your suggestion that adjudication hearings be recorded, the Director has the authority to establish and regulate the process used to resolve complaints under the Act. Part of the Director's mandate is to use fair and efficient procedures to resolve complaints in a timely and effective manner. This purpose is not served by recording proceedings, and it would be impractical to do so, given the volume of employment standards complaints handled by the Employment Standards Branch. Many tribunals with more formal processes than the Employment Standards Branch do not record their proceedings and there is also no statutory requirement to do so in the *Administrative Tribunals Act*.

Industrial Relations Officers in the Employment Standards Branch are hired through a process that is designed and implemented in accordance with criteria established by the BC Public Service Agency. These competitions are subject to review by the Merit Commissioner, and in fact, the Merit Commissioner has reviewed Employment Standards Branch competitions on more than one occasion and declared them to be in accordance with established criteria. A job description, which includes the criteria on which Industrial Relations Officers are selected for employment with the Employment Standards Branch, is attached for your reference.

Please let me know if you would like to meet to discuss your concerns.

Sincerely,



Shirley Bond
Minister

cc: Mr. Chris Johnson
Director, Employment Standards

Enclosure

Thanks for your
input, let me
know if you
want to
discuss!

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**Province of
British Columbia**

Deputy Government Caucus Whip
Parliamentary Secretary for the Northeast



Pat Pimm, M.L.A.
Peace River North

June 24th, 2013

Dear Honourable Shirley Bond,

I am doing a follow up letter to you in regards to the Northern Opportunities Program in School Districts 59, 60, & 81.

This is a fantastic program that could easily be added to school districts around the province and would go a long ways towards helping with worker shortages moving forward.

This program has been in operation for 10 years now and has a great success as per the 2 charts I am including for you. This program is 100% endorsed by Industry & First Nations as well as Northern Lights College. However; we are very close to losing this program at a time when it should be expanding to other regions of the province. This program has been financed in kind by the Industry, School Districts & College in the past with some actual financial assistance from the Northern Development Initiative Program.

The Problem we are facing is that it doesn't fit under the proper criteria for NDI funding and they have said this is the last year they are going to do so. The second problem is that the program thinks outside the box, therefore; doesn't really have a home in Education, Advanced Education or Apprenticeships.

I am begging you to have a serious look at this program before it is lost and gone forever which would be a true shame. This program probably requires about \$300, 000.00 per year to make it whole and to lead us into some great employment opportunities for the province. Please let me know how I can help make this program a permanent program within our system.

I would be more than happy to work with all 3 Ministries to make this program the true success story that it should be.

Pat Pimm M.L.A.
(Peace River North)



Ref: 98267

AUG 23 2013

Honourable Pat Pimm, MLA
Peace River North
Room 243, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your letter on the Northern Opportunities Program.

I appreciate receiving the success statistics for the program and agree that it is highly successful. In particular, the Northern Opportunities three-way industry/post secondary/secondary partnership serves as an excellent model for other regions. As an example, the Northwest Regional Workforce Table has recommended implementing a similar initiative in that area of the province.

I am pleased to note that the Industry Training Authority (ITA), in partnership with the Ministry of Education, has been providing ongoing financial support to School Districts 59, 60 and 81 for Northern Opportunities activities through the Accelerated Credit Enrolment in Industry Training (ACE-IT) and Secondary School Apprenticeships (SSA) programs. These programs enable secondary school students to earn dual credits towards their graduation, and a trades certificate, before leaving high school. In 2013/14 alone, each of the school districts is expected to receive the following amounts:

	ACE-IT	SSA Support Funding	Totals
School District 59	\$80,000	\$20,000	\$100,000
School District 60	\$74,000	\$30,000	\$104,000
School District 81	\$63,000	\$20,000	\$83,000
Total:	\$217,000	\$70,000	\$287,000

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In addition, as part of ITA's renewed Youth Strategy, School Districts 59 and 60 will each receive a further \$10,000 under the new SSA Labour Market Grant initiative, which is designed to respond to regional labour market needs.

ITA is also introducing a Dual Registration Grant in September 2013 which provides school districts with \$500 for each student that completes ACE-IT and goes on to register in SSA or vice-a-versa. The Dual Registration Grant incents school districts to encourage as many students as possible to complete both ACE-IT and SSA. Past experience has shown that students who complete both ACE-IT and SSA are twice as likely to continue on with, and complete, their apprenticeship program after graduation.

Moving forward, a key priority for me, as per my mandate letter, is to work with our colleagues, Ministers Fassbender and Virk, on the completion of a seamless 10-year skills training plan for students from high school through entry into the workforce. I have asked Ministry staff to work with the Ministries of Education and Advanced Education to identify further potential opportunities to support and expand programs like Northern Opportunities as part of that process.

Thank you again for raising the Northern Opportunities program to my attention.

Sincerely,



Shirley Bond
Minister

pc: Honourable Amrik Virk
Minister of Advanced Education

Honourable Peter Fassbender
Minister of Education

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RALPH SULTAN, M.L.A.
Member of the Legislative Assembly
West Vancouver - Capilano

July 5, 2013

Honourable Shirley Bond
Minister of Jobs,
Tourism and Skills Training
Minister Responsible for Labour
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister: *Smiley*

A North Shore resident, s22, has drawn my attention to a communications resource concerning career choices which might find profitable application in your ministry. It is a collection of short film clips aimed at youth trying to sort out career opportunities and what is entailed in actually finding work in different fields.

s22 colleague have produced some 600 video clips, of length varying from half a minute to 4 minutes, describing various jobs. In length and style, they are aimed at the youth and young adult market.

s22 colleague s22 produced this material for the Canadian Learning Channel, which broadcast them for three seasons, in 39 different episodes. They are now the intellectual property of s22 who is reportedly merely anxious to see them given broader application, possibly via YouTube. s22 assures me they are still current.

My office can supply the coordinates of s22 should you wish to explore this further. This resource seems to me to warrant investigation and discussion in view of the apparent aimlessness and uninformed "drift" of many of our high school – and university – graduates.

I would be glad to help if I can.

Yours truly,

Ralph Sultan, MLA
West Vancouver-Capilano



AUG 30 2013

Ref: 98681

Mr. Ralph Sultan, MLA
West Vancouver Capilano
409 – 545 Clyde Avenue
West Vancouver, BC V7T 1C5

Dear Colleague:

Ralph:

Thank you for your letter regarding the video resource showcasing career choices that may be made available to the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour (JTSTL).

I am interested in learning more about this resource, as assisting youth and young adults to find employment through the provision of training and relevant labour market information is a priority for JTSTL. If you would kindly provide contact information for ^{s22} Ms. Jennifer Wray, Director, WorkBC Products and Services, will contact them to discuss this resource further. Ms. Wray can be contacted by telephone at 250 387-3517, or by email to Jennifer.Wray@gov.bc.ca.

As you may know, JTSTL provides a valuable tool to the citizens of British Columbia (BC) through www.WorkBC.ca, an online resource that contains a job search database as well as relevant and up-to-date labour market statistics around industries and careers in BC. A number of resources under the www.WorkBC.ca brand have been created specifically for citizens looking to explore career options. These include:

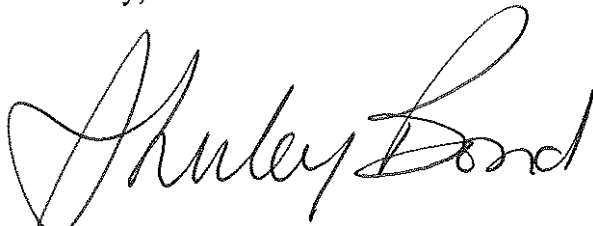
- Career Trek – A web series featuring 61 careers around the Province. The series shows viewers a typical day in the life, and key advice and labour market information. (www.careertrekbc.ca)
- WorkBC Career Profiles – Over 500 BC career profiles containing information on job duties, wages, employment outlooks and more. (www.workbc.ca/Careers/Pages/Careers.aspx)
- BC Labour Market Navigator – Provides the latest trends for over 500 BC occupations. (www.workbc.ca/navigator/)
- Build-A-Career – A career suitability quiz that helps youth discover careers in BC that match their abilities and work preferences. (www.buildacareer.ca/)

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Mr. Ralph Sultan, MLA
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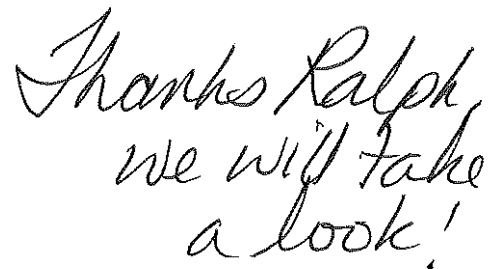
Again, thank you for sharing this information with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shirley Bond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Shirley" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Bond".

Shirley Bond
Minister

pc: Ms. Jennifer Wray

A handwritten note in black ink that reads "Thanks Ralph, we will take a look!". The text is written in a casual, cursive style. "Thanks Ralph," is on the first line, "we will take" is on the second line, and "a look!" is on the third line.