

ACKNOWLEDGE:

PROTOCOL: It is an honour to be here in the traditional territory of the Gitxsan Nation.

To those here today, I understand you recently had a loss in your community and my thoughts are with you.

PAT BELL, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation and MLA for Prince George-Mackenzie

DONALD STEELE, Chairman and CEO, Pacific Bioenergy (Attendance TBC)

BRAD BENNETT, Vice President of Operations, Pacific Bioenergy (TBC)

First Nations Chiefs, Councillors, Elders, community members

Union representatives (TBC)

Forest workers and families

THE SAWS ARE RINGING AGAIN IN KITWANGA

It is the wonderful sound of people at work...

... And it is the sound of success.

Congratulations to Pacific Bioenergy, Kitwanga, the Northern Development Initiative Trust and the Gitxsan (Git-san) and Gityanow (Git-an-yow) First Nations.

Your spirit of cooperation is what made this start-up possible.

By working together to create new relationships, you have breathed new life into this mill,

And new life into this community.

Because of your collaboration, 45 people are going back to work at the mill...

Another 45 people - employed in logging, hauling, silviculture and support services and supplies – are going back to work too.

Jobs like these support families.

Jobs like these help preserve your unique way of life,

Jobs like these allow your communities to prosper.

And these are jobs that will help support families and businesses from Terrace and the Hazeltons, to Smithers and Prince Rupert.

And THAT's what the economy is really about.

It's not just statistics and graphs – it's about people and families.

It's about having a sense of hope and optimism about the future.

That is my main job as Premier – to put families first by helping to support partnerships like these...

...Partnerships that create high-quality and sustainable jobs.

Pacific BioEnergy plans to eventually expand their wood pellet processing operations to the Kitwanga site, so there will be more job growth...

And I'm proud to tell you that similar stories are unfolding in other communities like yours right across rural British Columbia.

Kitwanga is the 27th mill to re-open since November, 2009.

There's a renaissance underway in forest communities across B.C. and it's being driven by growing demand from Asia ... particularly China.

We do live in a global economy and in order to secure job growth at home for your families, we sometimes end up tilling the soil far away.

That's what our Asian trade missions are all about and they ARE paying dividends.

That's a very encouraging trend because for us, forestry is much more than just an industry.

For First Nations, it is very much a part of your culture.

And it is woven into the very fabric of our province's identity.

I congratulate you on all the work you have done to build these new relationships.

It is an honour and a privilege to celebrate with you today, as the mill begins its new life here in Kitwanga.

-END-

**Smithers Chamber of Commerce
July 8, 2011**

Local First Nation: Wet'suwet'en (Wet-so-wet-en)

Event: what is it?

- Premier to speak on Families, Jobs, Open Government, the HST and the economy

Audience: who are they?

- GEORGE WHITEHEAD, PRESIDENT, Smithers Chamber of Commerce
- SCOTT GROVES, VICE-PRESIDENT, Smithers Chamber of Commerce
- DALE CLARK, TREASURER, Smithers Chamber of Commerce
- Smithers Chamber of Commerce members

Audience: what do they want to hear?

KEY THEMES: Families, Jobs, Open Government, the HST, the economy

It's a privilege to be here with you today in the hometown of Dan Hamuis.

Like many of you, I was heart-broken when Dan was injured in game 1 of the Stanley Cup finals.

But as a kid from Smithers, I know he's a fighter and will bounce back and lead the Canucks again next year.

And that's what people from Smithers are known for... your spirit and your ability to work together and support each other through good times and bad.

Each day, chamber members are working to make Smithers a prosperous, go-ahead place.

The strength of B.C.'s economy depends so much on what happens in the regions outside of Vancouver and Victoria.

And if we want to continue to provide the services people in this region have a right to expect, we need to turn the page on the outmoded 12 per cent GST and PST.

Government did a bad job of communicating the HST message to the public and people had a right to be angry. It made me angry and I said so at the time.

Now, I'm not here to tell you how to vote.

But I do want to separate emotion from fact.

Because this discussion isn't about politics, it's about our prosperity and what kind of tax policy we want.

The HST is expected to generate about \$80 million dollars per year in savings for the mining and natural gas sectors.

The recent expansion at the Endako Mine, just down the road, is a perfect example.

As a result of the HST, the project is costing \$8 million less and will create an additional 70 high-paying jobs at the mine.

We've heard from forestry, small business, agricultural, the resource sectors... all the businesses that mean so much to your economy... and they say the HST will help them grow their business.

But there was concern about the impact on families, so we undertook the largest public engagement exercise in the province's history, talking to more than 275,000 British Columbians on how we could improve the HST.

Based on that input, we're committed to a 10 per cent HST by 2014 – with the first one per cent reduction coming next July.

That means an average B.C. family will be about \$120 better off each year.

That's our first priority ... to make sure that B.C. families have the cash in their pockets to spend on the goods and services your members provide.

Now, the telephone town halls were a great experience.... but it can't be a one-time event.

I want to give citizens the power to influence government decisions that affect their lives... before we make the final decision.

Since taking office, I've been working for change and open government for all British Columbians. It's about listening ... and I've spent a lot of time listening to British Columbians.

Yesterday, I held a town hall meeting in Terrace to listen to people.

<<insert anecdote>>

We've also had town hall meetings in Fort St John, Comox, Cranbrook and Richmond.

The great thing about these meetings is that people are honest about what is going on - there is nothing sugar-coated about it.

People are polite, but they are clear about what is on their minds.

You know what people tell me they want the most?

They want jobs!

So that's what I believe my main job as Premier is ... to put families first by creating high-quality, sustainable jobs.

I think it's important for people to understand, the economy isn't just an abstract concept. It isn't about statistics and graphs.

It's about people – about families, about turning the conversations I have as Premier and that business people in this room have every day, into real, tangible improvements in people's lives.

Economic prospects are vitally important to how someone experiences life. People here in Smithers and across the northwest get that connection.

But there are a lot of people who don't.

I believe I am in a unique position to explain the link between businesses and the economy, jobs, and healthy families.

When you have a job and food on the table, you can focus on raising your kids and helping out your parents.

When we have strong families and raise our children well, they go on to support and build great communities like Smithers.

We have to give your kids the opportunity to raise their families in Smithers - for the lifestyle, for the sense of community, for family.

On your website, there's a great collection of stories about young people who came back to Smithers. One that stood up for me was from Kim Struthers, who said: in Vancouver you can SEE the mountains... in Smithers you can PLAY in them.

I believe we have to work together to champion the rural economies that drive our province.

And it all starts with understanding that link between healthy families and jobs.

That's what "families first" means: it means supporting businesses to create jobs.

And the fact is ... British Columbia is ripe for investment.

In June, Rio Tinto Alcan announced the largest private investment in the history of this province at its Kitimat smelter...

... \$3.5 billion dollars speaks volumes about the future of this province and the future of communities here in the northwest.

There's also a renaissance underway in forest communities across B.C. and it is being driven by growing demand from Asia ... particularly China.

For the first time ever, China is now the number-one overseas destination for B.C. lumber in terms of value AND volume.

I was in Kitwanga this morning congratulating Pacific Bioenergy, and the Gitxsan (Git-san) and Gityanow (Git-an-yow) First Nations.

They worked together to re-open the Kitwanga sawmill.

Now, 45 people are going back to work at the mill...

And another 45 people - employed in logging, hauling, silviculture and support services and supplies – are going back to work too.

And about 15-20 percent of Kitwanga's lumber sales will go to China.

We want to take the success we have had in opening Asian markets to our forestry products and repeat that in other sectors.

Our government is refocusing its efforts to encourage investment that will create good, stable jobs. When I took over as premier, I took all the job creation levers and put them in one place – under the leadership of Pat Bell.

When it comes to an economic development plan, our opportunities may be all over the map, but our strategy can't be.

We need to focus our efforts – and opening new mines for the fast-growing Asian economy is one of those opportunities.

That is why we are moving ahead with the Northwest Transmission Line project.

It will create jobs and attract investment here in Smithers, which has become a hub of expertise and services for mining in the north.

It will help revitalize the northwest and help you achieve your full potential.

If you want industry to grow in small towns, you have to create the infrastructure and you have to build partnerships.

And it is why we will lead more trade missions that will let foreign investors know about our B.C. advantage.

We want to let them know about the people and communities here in the northwest that are looking to build partnerships and create jobs.

My message is simple ... B.C. is "Open for Business."

By working together, we can build a better B.C. that works for you and your families.... right here in Smithers.

Thank you.

-END-

THANK YOU, IDA...

If your child is in Scouts...if you belong to a group like Kiwanis...if you volunteer at a food bank...

You know how important community gaming grants are to community groups.

They support arts and culture, sports and social services.

When I travel around the province and meet with community groups, the number one concern I hear is that they need sustainable and predictable funding, so they can continue to provide for families and communities in British Columbia.

One of my first actions as premier was to restore \$15 million in gaming grants that brought more than 500 organizations back up to historic funding levels...

As well, last week Minister Chong, provided the BC Arts Council with \$16 million for arts groups across the province.

But additional funding was only step one. During the leadership, I promised to review the governance and funding formulas to ensure charities and community groups receive predictable and sustainable funding.

Today, I'm pleased to announce that review will be underway and led by Skip Triplett, former president of Kwantlen Polytechnic University...

Skip has a diverse career and a wealth of experience that allows him to understand what communities and these groups need to thrive.

The Community Gaming Grant Review will get underway this summer and the final report will be back in our hands by the end of this year.

Skip will ask British Columbians:

How we can improve the program for everyone in the province?

Who should have access to funding?

What can we do with it? How are we accountable for it? What is government's role in gaming?

We want British Columbians to tell us what they think will work best for their community and most importantly what will work best for their families.

Mr. Triplett will be consulting broadly across the province, so British Columbians will have the opportunity to have their say.

We are making this process accessible to all British Columbians.

And we encourage you to tell us what you think.

We're determined to find out how British Columbians think we can do better...

And now, I'm very happy to introduce Skip Triplett to make a few comments.

- END -

**ADDITION OF ESOPHAGEAL CANCER TO FIREFIGHTERS'
CANCER PRESUMPTIONS**

July 15, 2011

KEY MESSAGES:

- **Firefighters put their lives on the line everyday and this is our way of recognizing how important and appreciated their work is.**
- **Firefighters keep our families and communities safe and they deserve to have the peace of mind that if they get sick they and their families will be taken care of.**
- **It's common sense – firefighters risk their lives and risk types of cancer, so we will be there to support them if they get sick.**

Premier will be introduced by MC, Minister Stephanie Cadieux.

Thank you Minister Cadieux

Good morning, everyone.

Every day, firefighters keep our families and communities safe.

Every day you risk your own lives to protect ours.

And every day, you make British Columbians proud.

Today is about giving something back - giving you the support you need and the respect you deserve.

Effective immediately, primary site esophageal cancer is being added to the list of cancers recognized as occupational diseases for firefighters.

This means firefighters and their families will no longer have to provide additional medical or scientific evidence that the cancer is work-related.

Today's announcement lifts the burden of proof from sick firefighters and their families.

Instead they will be able to concentrate on the far more important battle.

Each of you knows that health risks and sacrifice are part of the job.

You also know that the health risks don't always end when your shift finishes.

Changes like this are important to all firefighters and it's important to everyday British Columbians to show their respect, appreciation and support for the work that these men and women do every day.

But to one individual here today it has a deeper, personal meaning.

In a few minutes we will hear a very personal perspective from Pamela Alspach. Pamela lost her own father, Surrey firefighter Patrick Glendinning, to esophageal cancer.

The names of those who have fallen in the line of duty serve to remind us why worker safety will always be a priority for this government.

You asked us to add esophageal cancer to that list and we took that request very seriously.

This is the right thing to do and I'm proud we're doing it.

Thank you to the B.C. Professional Fire Fighters Association for your hard work and commitment to creating these changes.

With your help, and the help of our partners in safety around the province, we will continue to tackle these challenges head on.

And, I am confident that we will continue to see successes like the one we are celebrating today.

-END-

Key Messages:

1. Celebrating 26 years of the Walk and bringing BC families together under the common theme of inclusion and cultural recognition.
2. Thank you for the invaluable work you're doing to support new arrivals, especially families, to B.C.
3. Thank you for helping raise money for critical S.U.C.C.E.S.S. programs for those in need in the communities, particularly seniors, women, youths and families, and to establish opportune services to quench new challenges faced by the communities.

Imagine leaving your home country, travelling half way across the globe and landing in British Columbia.

Imagine not knowing the language, the culture or the geography.

Imagine a new life with no familiar faces.

For many of you, you know how this feels...

But for many of us, we can only imagine the anxiety and intimidation that comes with immigrating to a new country.

Last year, B.C. welcomed more than 44,000 immigrants to our province...

And since 1973, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. has been there for new Canadians...

To greet them, to step forward as the face of British Columbia.

Friendly, welcoming and ready to help.

On behalf of a grateful province, thank you.

Thank you for assisting newcomers to B.C. so they feel at ease in their new surroundings...

Thank you for helping them settle in and become part of the community.

Your work is both essential and appreciated....

By seniors and women, youth and families...
and by communities all across British Columbia.

Good luck today as you reach for your campaign goal of \$430,000...

Money needed to support the more than 180,000 client-services provided by S.U.C.C.E.S.S. in Metro Vancouver communities.

And congratulations on this, the 26th annual Walk with the Dragon!

-END-

When I became Premier I made a commitment to change and open up government to British Columbians.

But what exactly is open government?

To me, open government is about a different way of communicating.

It's about using all the tools at our disposal to connect the public to government in new and meaningful ways — making it easier for citizens to connect and share with us... and with each other.

The end result is that the people of this province can participate in improving the policies and services that impact their lives.

I believe how we talk AND how we listen to people is important.

Since becoming premier, I've held five town hall meetings in all corners of the province — hearing directly from people about their concerns, frustrations and hopes.

We have been using telephone town halls to connect with British Columbians and they have been very successful.

And today, we are taking three new significant steps that will help open government to British Columbians even more.

The main government website has been redesigned to put services for citizens' front and centre.

We wanted to make it easier to contact government... to find the right forms, to learn about government programs...

Putting the information people need at their fingertips, without having to search through a lot of different ministry sites.

We will also be the first province in Canada to launch open data with our new DataBC website

We are opening up government's data and information to the public to allow them to create value from it; to have informed discussions with us on issues; and to spark discussion about potential solutions to those issues.

The initial data sets are just the beginning; we will be constantly adding more sets as we go along.

And, finally, we have launched a new web site where we will post Freedom of Information requests and proactively publish ministers and deputy minister's monthly expenses.

These actions are a start and we will build on them in the months ahead.

I've issued a direction on behalf of Cabinet outlining how ministries will sustain these initiatives.

While these three actions involve online technology, open government isn't just about technology.

It's about more than that.

It's a real change in how government works with citizens.

Whether we are discussing climate change, or the impacts of an aging population, we need people to work together to be part of the solution.

Open government is about giving people access to the information they need to participate and help us find solutions to the issues that affect us all. After all, it's taxpayer's money and taxpayer's information.

I recognize this is a shift in how we do things and there may be growing pains, but government will support you as we move ahead.

The BC Public Service does first rate work and I am proud of how you have embraced the changes that have already taken place.

But I also want to challenge you to go further:

Take risks; Be open to new ideas;

Fuel a spirit of transparency, connection and collaboration in everything you do.

It is time to open government: to connect and communicate with the people we serve.

Government belongs to the people and by working together we can engage British Columbians and get them more involved in making our province an even better place.

Thank you.

-END-

Taku River Tlingit First Nation Agreement

Tuesday, July 19, 2011

Event: what is it?

- Signing of agreement with Taku River Tlingit First Nation for land and resource management and shared decision making, a first of its kind in northern B.C.

Audience to Acknowledge: who are they?

- Members of the Taku River Tlingit First Nations, Atlin & environmental industry reps who are pleased that both interests are being met, protected and sustained with more certainty under this agreement.
- Investment in BC will increase as industry realizes that relations with First Nations become more easily navigated and clearly laid out.
- Chief Gibby Jacob, Squamish First Nation [Coast Salish peoples] – for welcoming us to their traditional territory TBC pending venue
- John Ward, Spokesperson – Taku River Tlingit
- Other reps of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation – including dancers, staff who have worked on the agreement, and members who live in Vancouver
- Mary Polak, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
- Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands & Natural Resources Operations.
- Shawn Atleo, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations TBC
- Gathered elders, chiefs from neighbouring First Nations
- Ben Franzen, BC Wildlife Foundation

Community of Atlin, Represented by:

- Asa (pronounced Oh-sa) Berg
- Roberta Whelan
- Rose Anne Anttila
- Members of Environmental and Mining Industry Representatives

I'm honoured to be here today on the traditional territory of the Coast Salish peoples...

And I thank members from the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the community of Atlin for travelling so far to celebrate this great occasion...

Today's celebration is about balance.

This agreement will balance land protection and resource development...

...In more than 3 million hectares in the Taku River watershed.

Our agreement will protect areas that are culturally and ecologically significant ...

And promote job creation and economic development, bringing certainty for the future.

When I look around this room I see members of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, Atlin residents, the mining sector and ecologists.

It shows we have something to celebrate. It means that we have come together and collaborated to benefit all families in British Columbia.

Thirteen more areas in this watershed will be protected, and there will be clear, defined opportunities for resource development and investment in this area.

This watershed is almost as big as all of Vancouver Island and is an area of deep ecological and cultural meaning, and it will provide in other ways as well.

The Taku River Tlingit First Nation is working with the mining developers on activities that will be environmentally sound and bring economic renewal to the area....

And this in turn will bring investment in jobs for families in the area.

I want to thank all the members of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation for their participation in this process over the last three years.

And I would especially like to recognize John Ward, spokesperson for the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, who has always been an advocate for the environment and his First Nation.

His passion and vision of a protected watershed and First Nations participation in government-to-government relations is being realized today.

Together, we are sending a message that government and First Nations can work cooperatively and respectfully.

We can achieve agreements that promote economic development and protect the environment.

I'm told there is a Taku River Tlingit welcome sign that says the land connects all life, and if we take care of the land, the land will take care of us.

We're proud to partner with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation because we share this belief.

Together, we're strong, and together, we'll take care of the land as we move forward into a bright future for all British Columbia families in northwest B.C.

- END -

ACKNOWLEDGE:

ED STELMACH – Premier of Alberta

GREG SELINGER <Selen-jer> – Premier of Manitoba

DAVID ALWARD – Premier of New Brunswick

KATHY DUNDERDALE – Premier of Newfoundland

FLOYD ROLAND – Premier of Northwest Territories

DARRELL DEXTER – Premier of Nova Scotia

EVA AARIAK<Air-e-ak> – Premier of Nunavut

DALTON MCGUINTY – Premier of Ontario

ROBERT GHIZ <Giz> – Premier of PEI

BRAD WALL – Premier of Saskatchewan

DARRELL PASLOSKI – Yukon Premier

On behalf of the Premier of Quebec,

PIERRE MOREAU, Minister responsible for Canadian
Intergovernmental Affairs and

GEOFFREY KELLEY, Minister responsible for Native
Affairs

On behalf of the province and all British Columbians, I welcome you all to this Council of the Federation conference.

I am honoured to host all of you here in Vancouver.

We have a unique opportunity over the next two days...

To share our experiences and ideas... and demonstrate leadership on issues that matter to all Canadians.

Issues like putting families first... and making sure they are getting ahead.

Like Canada's place in the global economy and how we can make the most of growing economic opportunities in Asia and create jobs across the country.

And health care, especially how we can create healthier families – from early childhood to healthy seniors – along with stable funding.

And we will hear from Washington State Governor Christine Gregoire and Canadian Ambassador to the U.S. Gary Doer on the state of our relations with the U.S.

And this afternoon, we spoke about the need for continued national commitment to address violence against Aboriginal women across all of our jurisdictions.

For me, the Council of the Federation is an opportunity for us to express shared values and individual interests.

I am looking forward to lively discussions of the opportunities and challenges we face.

I want to express my thanks to all those who have worked so hard all year to make this council happen.

...The Council of the Federation Secretariat, delegates and government officials across Canada, our sponsors and our many volunteers.

You have done your work well...

Now it's our turn to roll up our sleeves and get down to business of building a better Canada, province by province.

-END-

KEY MESSAGES:

- Canada has a tremendous opportunity in the Asia Pacific.
- Through constructive discussion, we can build a stronger economy and create jobs across the country.
- These discussions have also been a chance to learn from each other and share best practices because we have many common causes – families getting ahead, job creation and health care that meets everyone's needs.

Thank-you Ian (MC Ian Hanomansing)

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And DALTON MCGUINTY – Premier of Ontario, who had to
leave today to deal with fires in the northwest of his province.

Welcome to British Columbia.

We're delighted to have you here on Canada's west coast and in this spectacular setting.

I want to thank all of our volunteers and sponsors for making this conference possible.

As they say, good ideas are where you find them and I hope you'll agree that this round of meetings has already proven its value.

It's been good to hear first-hand from other premiers about the opportunities and challenges each face, and the solutions that are being explored.

The voices and the languages may differ...

But you know what?

From coast to coast to coast, our families – and by extension our governments - worry about the same things.

... access to quality health care

... well-paid jobs

... making sure families are getting ahead.

And it all starts with a strong economy....

That's what creates those good jobs that support families and generate the revenues that our governments rely upon to provide the services families need.

Now, we're here at the Pacific Gateway, perfectly situated to connect Asia to the rest of North America and to the significant opportunities that lie ahead.

Something that will help the economy, not just of B.C., but of every province in Canada.

Just think about these two statistics.

China has to build a city the size of Toronto every year to keep up with its growth.

India has a middle class 10 times the size of Canada's population.

For all of Canada, we have a tremendous opportunity and if we work together, we can do great things in these emerging markets.

At the same time, Canada continues to enjoy a strong relationship with the U.S. - our best friend and most important trading partner.

And ... the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement promises new markets to the east.

Moving forward, we all have an opportunity to expand our vision for the future.

By 2020 it's expected that trade with the Asia-Pacific alone will reach \$230 billion for Canada.

Think of what that will mean for our economies...

Think of what that will mean for our families, for our urban, rural and First Nation communities...

I believe that our provinces and territories together CAN build a better and brighter future for our children and grandchildren, here in B.C. and all across Canada.

-END-

Thank you for joining me today. It's a pleasure to be here.

These are uncertain times and I know families are watching events around the world with interest.

That's why we are redoubling efforts on the jobs front. We are going to focus on defending and creating jobs.

And huge part of creating those jobs for BC families is our Asia Pacific Initiative.

We are going to create even more opportunities for British Columbians.

Our efforts so far are paying off.

For the first time ever we sent more softwood to China than we did to the US- creating even more forestry jobs for British Columbians and breathing new life into northern and interior communities.

And for the first time ever we exported more goods to Asia than we did to the US.

Asia is our future and it's something I've been talking about and will continue to talk about everywhere I go. I brought it up at the recent meeting of Canadian premiers and they all agreed to focus on developing these markets.

We're looking across the Pacific for opportunity and we need to create strong ties and relationships.

But it's not just government that creates these opportunities.

It starts with some of the people in this very room. So I'd like to open the floor to you.

I'm happy to answer your questions.

I'd also like to hear from you- What can government do to help you, your business and your family?

-30-