

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS SECRETARIAT
PREMIER'S ESTIMATES NOTES
MAY 2023

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2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

Title: B.C. – Federal Relations

Issue: B.C.'s engagement with the federal government

Response:

- The B.C. and federal governments are in frequent, close contact at all levels – from the Premier and the Prime Minister onto the departments – to discuss opportunities to work together for the benefit of all British Columbians, as well as on common challenges.
- The federal government and B.C. share many common priorities that provide opportunities for partnership: improving health care, addressing housing availability and affordability, growing a clean and inclusive economy, improving public safety in communities, and advancing Indigenous reconciliation.
- We will continue to focus on working with the federal government to get results for British Columbians.

Background/Status:

Areas where B.C. has successfully made our voice heard and/or coordinated our actions with the federal government:

- The COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery, including vaccine and test procurement; commercial rent assistance; Canada-U.S. border restrictions; and pan-Canadian sick leave.
- Climate action, where B.C. is recognized as Canada's closest provincial ally in the fight against climate change. Both governments are aligned on emissions reductions and pollution pricing targets, and united in their commitments to investing in the clean energy transition and advancing the market for clean technology.
- Substance use including decriminalization: Health Canada granted a three-year exemption within B.C. to remove criminal penalties for people who possess a small amount of certain illicit substances for personal use, as part of both governments' aligned responses to the opioid epidemic and to building a continuum of care for mental health and substance use for people throughout the province and Canada.
- Emergency management: Following the devastating year of severe weather events in 2021, B.C. and Canada continued to coordinate their response and recovery efforts resulting in \$5 billion in federal funding for flooding, wildfire recovery, and drought.
- Public safety, including by securing a commitment from the federal government to make legislative changes to reform the bail system, and to support provincial innovations to address repeat, violent offenders.
- Health funding, including reaching an agreement in principle to improve health-care services across B.C. through \$3.3 billion over 10 years of new bilateral federal funding focusing on shared health-care priorities, and \$273 million through the immediate, one-time Canada Health Transfer top-up to address urgent needs.

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- Reconciliation: B.C. and the federal government are closely aligned in our commitments to Indigenous reconciliation. Both governments are committed to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
- Indigenous child welfare, including through the historic March 24, 2023 coordination agreement between Splatšin, Canada and B.C. to support the ongoing exercise of Splatšin's jurisdiction of their Child, Family and Community Services.

Other areas where B.C. continues to make our voice heard include:

- Infrastructure (e.g. George Massey Crossing, Belleville Terminal Redevelopment);
- Economic development and major projects in the clean economy space.
- The acute need for Indigenous housing, both on and off reserve, in rural and urban centres.
- The need for a coordinated, all of government approach to improving access to housing and supports in the Downtown Eastside and other urban centres.
- Coastal issues (e.g. Pacific salmon restoration, Indigenous commercial fisheries, the Oceans Protection Plan, marine conservation areas); and
- Cross-border issues with the United States (see separate notes).

Many aspects of the recent federal budget align well with B.C.'s priorities, for example:

- Clean economy and industrial transformation (e.g. a hydrogen investment tax credit, \$3 billion over 13 years for clean electricity, and \$500 million over 10 years in new money plus \$1.5 billion reallocated from other priorities to support clean technology projects through the Strategic Investment Fund);
- Housing (\$4 billion over seven years to co-develop and implement the Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy);
- Opioids (\$359 million over five years to combat the opioid epidemic through federal substance use and addictions programs and \$158 million over 3 years for mental health supports).

Contact: Grant Smith – 250 387-1042
Executive Director, Federalism and Canadian Intergovernmental Policy

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

Title: Health Care Funding

Issue: Negotiations for improved federal health care funding

Response:

- Increased, sustained federal funding for health care has been a top priority for all Premiers over the past few years. Pressure from Premiers, supported by their Finance and Health Ministers, led to a First Ministers' Meeting and funding offer in February.
- The offer presented by the Prime Minister in February falls short of Premiers' request, but will help. Premiers accepted the offer but expressed disappointment given the strong case for more funding than was offered.
- Given the importance of health care, B.C. had already committed to substantial investments and improvements to health services before the federal government made its funding offer to Premiers.
- B.C.'s Budget 2023 will increase provincial spending on health care to almost \$31 billion in 2023/24, representing an increase of 10.6% or about \$3 billion.

Background/Status:

- Health care is already the largest single expenditure for B.C., and all provinces and territories, and the challenges ahead are significant.
- Provinces and territories are already making substantial investments and improvements to health services. However, these improvements could be accelerated and expanded through a significant, long-term increase in recurrent funding via the Canada Health Transfer (CHT).

Premiers' Request, the Federal Offer and the Premiers' Response

- Premiers had asked for a strengthened long-term federal funding partnership, including increased, recurrent funding through the CHT base accompanied by an appropriate escalator, which would have addressed immediate challenges and allowed for longer-term improvements. They agreed that short-term funding was not the answer.
- The Premiers' request through the Council of the Federation (COF) was for the federal government to increase its share of health care funding through the CHT to 35%, which would have amounted to an immediate injection starting at \$28 billion per year and increasing thereafter.
- On February 7, 2023, Prime Minister Trudeau presented Premiers with a federal funding plan. It included new funding of \$49 billion over 10 years, \$46 billion of which would go to provinces and territories:
 - a one time \$2 billion CHT top up [B.C.: \$272 million];
 - an estimated \$17.3 billion over ten years through a temporary increase in the minimum annual growth rate of the CHT [B.C.: \$2.4 billion];
 - \$25 billion in tailored bilateral agreements over ten years [B.C.: \$3.3 billion];

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- \$1.7 billion over five years to support wage increases for personal support workers and related professions [B.C. share to be determined]; and
- an increase to the Territorial Investment Fund.
- In addition to the amounts for provinces and territories, the federal plan includes an Indigenous Health Equity Fund and investments in health data.
- On February 16, 2023, Premiers wrote to the Prime Minister to accept the federal funding, while noting their disappointment and proposing next steps.

B.C. Agreement in Principle and Current Status

- Ministers Adrian Dix and Jennifer Whiteside wrote federal Ministers Jean-Yves Duclos (Health) and Carolyn Bennett (Mental Health and Addictions) on February 24, 2023, agreeing in principle to the new funding.
- The agreement in principle was announced on March 1, 2023.
- B.C. continues to recognize the importance of increased health funding as reflected in B.C.'s Budget 2023.
- The announced federal health funding is still subject to completing agreements with provinces and territories, federal government approvals and authorities through their budget process.
- Recent announcements about increased federal government transfers to support health care services are not included in the revenue assumptions for Budget 2023 due to timing.
- Further details regarding federal plans for both Personal Support Workers Wage Support and the Indigenous Health Equity Fund are still being communicated to Provinces and Territories.

Contact: Grant Smith

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

Title: **Interprovincial Relations**

Issue: **B.C.'s participation in the Council of the Federation, Western Premiers' Conference and other interprovincial relations**

Response:

- B.C. pursues constructive working relationships with all other provinces and territories, both bilaterally and through multilateral tables like the Council of the Federation and the Western Premiers' Conference.
- These relationships allow us to project our influence on the national stage by joining forces with others and by speaking up to ensure that the national consensus reflects B.C.'s interests.

Background/Status:

Council of the Federation (COF)

- The Council of the Federation (COF) is composed of the thirteen Premiers of Canada's provinces and territories. It was established in 2003, building on the earlier practice of Annual Premiers' Conferences.
- The Chair of COF is assumed by a Premier on a rotational basis, typically for a one-year term.
 - B.C. was Chair of COF in 2021/22. The current Chair is Premier Heather Stefanson of Manitoba.
 - The Chair for 2023/24 will be Premier Tim Houston of Nova Scotia. The exact date of the transition is yet to be determined but will be at or after the 2023 summer meeting.
- COF ordinarily meets at least once each year, with the main summer meeting being supplemented as necessary by a shorter winter meeting. B.C. hosted the last in-person summer meeting in Victoria on July 11-12, 2022. Premiers have met virtually several times since then, and they met in person on February 6-7, 2023 in Ottawa on the margins of the First Ministers' Meeting on health funding.
- The 2023 COF summer meeting will take place in Winnipeg on July 11-12, 2022.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, Premiers used their meetings and calls to exchange views and information on important aspects of the provincial and territorial response to the pandemic and to discuss shared approaches to related First Ministers' calls.
- The Premiers' top priority – a First Ministers' Meeting on health care funding – was fulfilled on February 7, 2023. Going forward, COF meetings may focus on additional collective priorities of Premiers such as affordability, housing, federal infrastructure funding, labour markets, immigration, and Canada-U.S. relations, including trade.

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- COF is supported by a Secretariat funded by all provinces and territories.

Western Premiers' Conference

- The Western Premiers' Conference (WPC) is a forum to advance shared interests of Western Canada through enhanced cooperation and constructive dialogue.
- The WPC is comprised of seven Premiers: B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut.
- The WPC normally meets once each year. Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe chaired the 2022 WPC in Regina from May 26-27, 2022.
- B.C. will be chairing the 2023 WPC in Whistler on June 26-27, 2023.
- WPC members do not make financial contributions for the WPC; however, members incur expenses for travel costs to annual meetings and hosting the annual meeting while they are Chair.

Contact: Grant Smith – 250 387-1042
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2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

Title: Nooksack River Flooding

Issue: Catastrophic flooding caused by the overflow of the Nooksack River in Washington State in November 2021

Response:

- B.C. has a strong partnership with our neighbours in Washington State, and I am pleased that both governments are working closely to come up with long-term solutions to address flooding challenges that have been present for decades. This is a neighbour-to-neighbour exercise that will draw upon the many successful collaborations we have undertaken with our friends across the border.
- On March 15, 2022 Governor Inslee and Premier Horgan announced further bilateral cooperation to address flooding issues.
- Since then, representatives of provincial, state and both federal governments as well as local and Indigenous governments on both sides of the border have met twice for site visits – one to Everson, WA in July 2022 and one to Abbotsford in September 2022.
- The Nooksack Transboundary Flood Initiative has been created with a three-tiered governance model – leadership, policy and technical – of which the policy and technical tables have been meeting since September 2022. A leadership meeting is being planned for later this Spring.
- In parallel, the Province is supporting First Nations and the Cities of Abbotsford and Chilliwack to enhance collaboration on flood risk mitigation planning in the Sumas Prairie.
- The Province has increased resources for the River Forecast Center and strengthened monitoring and communication about Nooksack River conditions with counterparts in Washington State.
- Abbotsford has completed dike repairs, temporary works, and more permanent repairs, where appropriate, to structures that were damaged by the atmospheric river events.
- B.C. and Washington are close partners, whose dedication to working collaboratively on shared interests such as the Nooksack was reinforced during the trip MLA Glumac and I undertook to Washington State on March 13. During our conversation Governor Inslee restated his commitment to our partnership on this issue.

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

- The Nooksack River issue is decades old, and the last significant change made with respect to dikes was in 2003 when the *Flood Hazard Statutes Amendment Act* was revised to transfer many provincial flood management responsibilities to local government to manage.
- We are taking a thoughtful and inclusive approach to designing a solution that works better for all levels of government, as well as reflecting the Province's obligations under the *Declaration Act*, and I am confident that the partnership with the Governor of Washington State will yield good results for the people of B.C.

Background/Status:

- The Nooksack River runs through Whatcom County in Washington, and when it overflows after heavy rains, it spills into the Sumas Prairie in the Fraser Valley.
- Parties participating in the Nooksack Transboundary Flood Initiative include the Province of B.C. (IGRS, FOR, EMCR, MOTI, and AGRI); Sumas, Leq'a:mel and Matsqui First Nations; City of Abbotsford; Washington State (WA) Governor's Office and Department of Ecology; Whatcom County; Nooksack Indian Tribe and Lummi Nation. The technical table also includes the City of Chilliwack, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. National Weather Service, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- Minister Ma will represent B.C. at the leadership table, with MLA Glumac's support as Premier's liaison for the Pacific Northwest.
- Intergovernmental Communications

- Together, the Nooksack Transboundary parties are working to:
 - Respond to more frequent and severe flooding of the Nooksack River caused by climate change;
 - Bring together the necessary resources and relevant experts to help identify, evaluate and advance solutions; and,
 - Drive the design of projects and programs and identify sources of funding.
- A third-party facilitator, Kearns and West (WA-funded but jointly directed), will support the parties in finalizing the framework agreement, coordinating a leadership meeting in May or June (date to be finalized), and work planning among the tables up to June 30, 2023, with an option to extend.
- Provincial staff have communicated to WA a sense of urgency in reaching a signed agreement and making progress toward shared outcomes.

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- Intergovernmental Communications

- Staff at the Ministry of Forests are also leading discussions for long-term flood planning in the Sumas Prairie, and the approach for these two initiatives has been integrated so that any projects that result from the Nooksack River partnership is complementary to planning efforts that are being lead by the City of Abbotsford for floodplain management.
- The Ministry of Forests is also working on a provincial flood strategy, and it is anticipated that the Nooksack River flooding prevention work will be incorporated into these broader efforts.
- This is not the first time that B.C. has partnered with Washington State to address flooding concerns related to the Nooksack River. In 1990, an International Task Force was formed to create technical and policy recommendations, and that work will be utilized in the engagement process going forward.
- Jurisdiction over water management issues in the United States presents a significant logistical challenge. Regulatory and response functions are distributed across multiple agencies. The appropriation process to secure funding for recovery and infrastructure projects often takes place at the federal level, but funding is disbursed by state and county governments.

Contact: Ken Macartney 250-952-1465
Executive Director, International Relations

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TOPIC: Ultra High-Speed Ground Transportation Corridor Project (UHSGT)

ISSUE: UHSGT Project Update.

KEY MESSAGES:

- Washington State Department of Transportation (Washington) has been leading work with B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and the State of Oregon on the concept of an Ultra High-Speed Ground Transportation corridor (UHSGT) to connect Vancouver, Seattle, and Portland.
- The proposed project will assess various transportation options to reduce travel times between Vancouver, Seattle, and Portland, including high-speed rail capable of achieving travel speeds of up to 400 km/h.
- UHSGT is currently in the early planning phases. Washington has submitted an application to the US Department of Transportation for \$197M (USD) in funding. B.C. has contributed \$900,000 to support initial planning.
- Given the scope, complexity, and international nature of this project, significant additional planning work is required before a viable, shovel-ready project business case is available for investment decision.
- Next steps for the project led by Washington include establishing a governance framework, developing a stakeholder engagement plan, and creating a funding strategy.
- B.C. is working closely with Washington and Oregon to advance project planning through regular executive-level policy committee and staff-level technical committee meetings.
- The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is leading provincial involvement in the project, including supporting Washington-led work, coordinating engagement with provincial stakeholders, and identifying benefits and issues of interest to B.C.

KEY FACTS:

- In 2021, Premier Horgan and Governors Inslee (Washington) and Brown (Oregon) signed an MOU committing to advancing UHSGT, including establishing a Policy Committee with representation from B.C., Washington, Oregon, and regional planning entities.
- The project could benefit the province by shortening travel times, lowering carbon emissions, increasing connectivity, strengthening economic relations, fostering equitable growth and job creation, promoting labour mobility, and supporting indigenous reconciliation.
- In 2022, the Washington Legislature provided \$4 million in funding to commence the UHSGT work envisaged by the MOU. Direction for this funding includes development of a decision and governance framework for all parties, engagement strategy, funding strategy, Corridor ID program, scenario analysis, and development of a coordinating entity responsible for advancing the project.

Final Date: March 29, 2023

- Washington is applying for funding for \$197M through US Federal Railroad Administration funding programs to carry out planning phase activities. B.C. provided a Letter of Support for the project application to the US federal programs to US Department of Transportation Secretary, Pete Buttigieg.
- Washington will be notified in late 2023 if they have been awarded funding. The funding will support required technical and advisory planning requirements to advance the project.
- The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is currently working to define the Province's interests relative to this project, long-term commitments, and potential scope of funding or further support, including stakeholder and Indigenous engagement with an intent to confirm the approach with Cabinet.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

- To date, B.C. has provided funding three times to support UHSGT work: \$300,000 (CND) in 2019 and \$300,000 (CND) in 2020 through the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation (JERI); and more recently \$300,000 (CND) in 2022 to support the current scope of work and planning activities being led by Washington.

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

Title: Transboundary Mining

Issue: Mining activities and transboundary waterways

Response:

- B.C. maintains regular contact with U.S. partners on a range of cross-border environmental files.
- B.C. continues to work with counterparts in Alaska and Montana to implement the Memoranda of Understanding and Statement of Cooperation.
- B.C. also continues to work closely with Indigenous peoples to uphold the Province's commitments under the *Declaration Act*.
- The 2018 Environmental Assessment Act was introduced in order to modernize the Environmental Assessment process, and to better allow the Province to manage emerging concerns.
- B.C. aims to reflect the best available science in its environmental management processes.

Background/Status:

Alaska

- The tailings storage facility failure at the Mount Polley Mine in August 2014 heightened long-standing concerns in Alaska about B.C. mine development along the border, and threatened to impact mining development in northwestern B.C.
- On November 25, 2015, the former Premier of B.C. and Alaska Governor Bill Walker signed a Memorandum of Understanding. The MOU is being implemented through a Statement of Cooperation on the Protection of Transboundary Waters, which was signed October 6, 2016.
- The Statement of Cooperation is overseen by senior government officials from the B.C. government and the government of Alaska. Per the Statement of Cooperation, B.C. and Alaska have also established a joint water quality monitoring program.
- In February 2019, the Province and Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN) collaboratively selected a proponent to develop a Remediation Plan for Tulsequah Chief Mine. A final Remediation Plan was submitted to the Province in April 2020.
- The Province, in collaboration with TRTFN, continued with interim reclamation actions at the former mine site for the third consecutive year over the 2022 summer field season. Teck Resources Limited voluntarily provided funding to support this work, totaling over \$3 million to date. Discussions are ongoing with Teck Resources to implement final reclamation for the site.

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

- The mine is currently owned by Chieftain Metals Inc. (Chieftain), which acquired the property in 2010. Chieftain had agreed to address the historical contamination issues as part of re-development of the mine.
- The Province continues to pursue available options in the intervening period for holding all past and present owners of the Tulsequah Chief Mine accountable.
- In January 2023, the Chief Inspector of Mines ordered Chieftain to address outstanding compliance issues at the former mine site and set out the enforcement consequences of failure to take action, which may include cancellation of the permit.

Montana

- As provided for in a 2003 Environmental Cooperation Arrangement and 2010 Memorandum of Understanding, B.C. and Montana have made commitments to protect and enhance the transboundary environment. The implementation of the agreements is being overseen by officials from the Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy and Montana's Department of Environmental Quality.
- B.C. ministries have received a number of letters on selenium in transboundary waters from U.S. agencies at both the state and federal level over the past several years. Many of these letters have made reference to B.C.'s obligations under the terms of the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 and have suggested that the International Joint Commission should intervene on the issue. Both the Ministries of Environment & Climate Change Strategy and Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation continue to engage with stakeholders on both sides of the border.
- On March 24, 2023, Prime Minister Trudeau and President Biden issued a joint statement that "Canada and the United States also intend to reach an agreement in principle by this summer to reduce and mitigate the impacts of water pollution in the Elk-Kootenay watershed, in partnership with Tribal Nations and Indigenous Peoples, and in order to protect the people and species that depend on this vital river system."
- B.C. has requested collaboration and coordination between B.C. and Canada, and with Ktunaxa, to ensure approaches are aligned to provide comprehensive environmental protection that addresses Ktunaxa's concerns.
- In February 2023 the Province launched the "Elk Valley Water Quality Hub," a website that provides data and information on water quality and regulatory activities in the Elk Valley including:
 - Current water quality conditions and treatment progress information that previously was not easily accessible to the public.
 - Context on the history and impacts of mining in the Elk Valley, and regulatory steps the Province has taken to increase Teck's investments in water treatment initiatives.
 - Details regarding monitoring programs to support improved water quality.
 - A map-based dashboard showing monitoring results for mining-related substances across the valley compared to monthly regulatory limits.

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

- The Hub has been shared with governments and interested parties in both Canada and the U.S. with an offer for workshops and demonstrations. Feedback has been positive and the site appears to address a number of questions and concerns relating to access and availability of data and information.
- Ktunaxa Nation Council (KNC), the four Ktunaxa First Nations, and BC recently signed an extension of the Strategic Engagement Agreement (SEA) until Mar. 31, 2024, during which time the parties will address governance structures, characterize how aboriginal rights are held within the Ktunaxa Nation, and create interim structures to ensure government-to-government (G2G) engagement continues.
- Montana approved a water quality standard regulating selenium concentrations for the U.S. side of Lake Kootenai in December 2020. A draft selenium Water Quality Objective (WQO) for Kootenai Reservoir was developed by ENV and KNC through a rigorous multi-year collaborative and transparent process using the best available data, sound science, and established B.C.-specific protocols and procedures for developing WQOs.
- B.C. is preparing to proceed to the public comment period on a draft selenium WQO for Kootenai Reservoir later this spring.

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Executive Director, International Relations

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

Title: Daylight Saving Time (DST)

Issue: Circumstances regarding whether to make DST permanent in B.C.

Response:

- Most places in B.C. moved to Daylight Saving Time (DST) on March 12, 2023.
- In 2019, amendments to the *Interpretation Act* were passed to enable B.C. to switch to a "Pacific Standard Time" (permanent DST).
- The legislation was in response to the results of a province-wide survey released in September 2019. Out of the 223,273 people who responded to the survey, 93% approved of ending the seasonal time change. 54% of British Columbians said it was "important" or "very important" for B.C. to be aligned with neighbouring jurisdictions in its time observance practices.
- B.C.'s policy position on the permanent move to DST has been that this would be considered alongside decisions in other jurisdictions in Canada and in the United States.
- I am encouraged that the U.S. Senate has reintroduced legislation enabling a move to permanent DST for U.S. states.
- An Order-in-Council will be needed to bring B.C.'s provisions into force, if and when the province decides to move to DST permanently.
- Other than the Yukon, no other jurisdiction in the Pacific Time Zone (or Alaska) has been able to implement permanent DST.

Background/Status:

- In 2019, B.C. passed legislation to enable B.C. to switch to a "Pacific Standard Time," alongside jurisdictions in the U.S., including Washington state, Oregon, and California.
- At least 45 states have proposed legislation to change their observance of DST, of which 18 states have enacted legislation or passed resolutions to provide for year-round DST. All states observe DST except for Arizona and Hawaii which remain in standard time all year.
- While year-round DST has been approved in Washington state and Oregon, and has been considered in California, any move to enact the change requires state legislation to be approved by the U.S. federal government.

Congressional Approval

- States need authorization from Congress to become exempt from the Uniform Time Act of 1966 which established the system of uniform DST throughout the United States.

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

- On March 15, 2022, the U.S. Senate voted unanimously to pass the Sunshine Protection Act, legislation that would permit the establishment of permanent DST in jurisdictions across the United States. The House of Representatives did not pass the bill prior to the close of Congress, and as a result the bill died. The bill received bipartisan support and was co-sponsored by Senator Patty Murray (D-Washington) and Senator Ron Wyden (D-Oregon).
- On March 1, 2023 Senator Marco Rubio (R-Florida) re-introduced the Sunshine Protection Act. The bill has been read twice and referred to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation. A companion bill has been introduced in the House of Representatives.

Yukon

- On March 4, 2020, Yukon formally announced it will make DST permanent.

Washington

- In May 2019, Governor Jay Inslee signed legislation to make DST permanent in Washington state but has opted to wait for neighbouring jurisdictions before enacting the legislation.
- Washington has indicated that they would prefer to stay aligned with California.

Oregon

- In June 2019, Governor Kate Brown signed legislation to keep most of the state on permanent DST. This legislation is contingent on both California and Washington state approving similar laws.

California

- In 2018, California voters supported Proposition 7 which gave state lawmakers the authority to move the state to year-round DST following approval from Congress.
- In order to make that change, such a proposal first needs to pass through the state legislature. State lawmakers have tried and failed to pass measures by the end-of-session deadline, mostly recently in 2022.
- A new effort was introduced by Assembly member Steven Choi in February 2022. If successful, the bill would set California's standard time to year-round DST upon federal approval.

Contact: Kenneth Macartney (250) 217-8278
Executive Director, International Relations

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

Title: MLA Glumac Role - PNWER

Issue: Role of MLA Rick Glumac as Premier's Liaison for the Pacific Northwest

Response:

- I was pleased to appoint MLA Rick Glumac to the position of the Premier's Liaison for the Pacific Northwest.
- In this role, MLA Glumac will help strengthen our government's relationship with our American neighbours to the south.
- In his upcoming term as President to the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) he will also help promote cross-border commerce and mutual cooperation.
- He will support me on my missions to the region, and support work by the Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness on the Nooksack River Transboundary Initiative, as well as support work by the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to implement high-speed rail between Metro Vancouver and Portland.
- He will also explore opportunities to build greater linkages between the Pacific Northwest state legislators and the BC Government.

Background/Status:

The attached March 8, 2023 mandate letter from Premier Eby to MLA Glumac outlines the roles and expectations associated with this appointment.

Previously, MLA Glumac had served in the role of Premier's Liaison for the State of Washington, a position he was appointed to by former Premier Horgan on December 15, 2020.

MLA Glumac is currently Vice-President, Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) and will assume the Presidency at the PNWER Annual Summit in July 2023 in Boise, Idaho. His Presidency will continue until the end of the PNWER Annual Summit in July 2024, which will take place in Whistler. PNWER is a statutory public/private nonprofit created in 1991 by the US states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Montana and Washington and the Canadian provinces/territories of Alberta, B.C., Saskatchewan, Yukon and NWT. Its mission is to increase the economic well-being and quality of life for all citizens of the region, while maintaining and enhancing our natural environment. Among other activities, it promotes "models of success", promotes greater regional collaboration and exchange of information, and seeks to leverage regional influence in Ottawa and Washington, D.C.

Contact: Ken Macartney 250 217-8278
Executive Director, International Relations



March 8, 2023

Rick Glumac, MLA
Port Moody-Coquitlam
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear MLA Glumac:

I would like to thank you for the work you have done to date to fulfill our government's commitment to build a stronger British Columbia and ensure our economic recovery includes everyone.

Our government is committed to listening to the issues that matter most to British Columbians. Building strong international relationships will help protect British Columbia against uncertain global economic forces. In the context of rising inflation, supply chain challenges, and labour shortages, fortifying our existing connections will ensure that we can solidify our strong employment numbers and grow our economy in a way that is sustainable for future generations.

I am appointing you to the position of the Premier's Liaison for the Pacific Northwest.

In this role, you will strengthen our government's relationship with our American neighbours to the south. You will engage through your work and upcoming term as President to the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) to bolster and promote cross-border commerce and mutual cooperation.

I expect you to:

- As the incoming President of PNWER, explore opportunities to connect PNWER with Canadian businesses, academic, non-profits and other stakeholders, and identify opportunities to grow BC partnerships through these discussions.

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Parliament Buildings
Victoria

- Additionally, work to build up the PNWER Canada entity to better access the opportunities and advantages available south of the border and connect PNWER to stakeholders that would benefit from an enhanced PNWER Canada. This should include hosting the PNWER conference, associated with assuming the role of President.
- Accompany and support me on my missions as Premier to the Pacific Northwest region.
- Support the Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness' work to establish the Nooksack River Transboundary Initiative, connecting our government's continued efforts on flood mitigation in the Sumas region through a strong partnership with Washington State to address flood risk from the Nooksack River.
- Support the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure on the work to implement high-speed rail between Metro Vancouver and Portland, through a strong partnership with our neighbours to the south.
- Explore opportunities to build greater linkages between the Pacific Northwest state legislators and the BC Government to allow for better information sharing and collaboration.

I look forward to hearing updates on your work and receiving your advice to help ensure government programs and policies build a stronger province that leaves no one behind.

Sincerely,


David Eby, KC
Premier

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

Title: Indo-Pacific Relations

Issue: B.C.'s interests in the Indo-Pacific and Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy

Response:

- British Columbia has significant and long-standing economic, cultural and people-to-people ties with the Indo-Pacific.
- British Columbia is deeply connected to the region through its large and diverse diaspora communities, which are also important assets in building stronger relationships.
- B.C. seeks to expand and diversify opportunities for its exporters in the region, as well as promote international education and tourism.
- To help our exporters and attract investment, British Columbia has 14 Trade and Investment Offices across the Indo-Pacific region.
- Premier-led and Minister-led missions to the region are also important in opening doors for B.C. companies, attracting investment, furthering educational and other ties and building relationships.
- As the gateway to the Pacific, British Columbia welcomes strengthened engagement by Canada as laid out in the new Indo-Pacific Strategy.
- We welcome efforts to expand market access and trade diversification in the region through trade agreements such as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and those being negotiated with ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), Indonesia and India.
- We are in regular touch with the federal government in relation to Canada's evolving foreign and trade policy approach towards China.
- Like the rest of Canada, British Columbia has a large trading relationship with China and we have a history of cooperation on the transition to a low carbon economy, including the use of mass timber and hydrogen.
- We recognize that defending Canada's national interests will at times require challenging the Chinese government, and that Canada will also seek to cooperate with China to find solutions to global issues such as climate change.
- B.C.'s increasing engagement in the region is also driven by India's growing economic and demographic importance, B.C.'s long-standing and deep relationships with Japan and South Korea and the centrality of ASEAN to the region.

Background/Status:

The Indo-Pacific, which stretches from Central Asia to East Asia and includes the Indian Ocean and Oceania, will play a critical role in shaping the future of Canada, and British Columbia in particular, over the next half-century. Encompassing 40 economies, over four billion people and \$47.19 trillion in economic activity, it is the world's fastest growing region.

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

As Canada's gateway province, British Columbia has long-standing and deep ties to the Indo-Pacific. This translates to an outsized role for B.C. in Canadian exports to the region. B.C.'s share of Canadian exports globally is 9%. In the Indo-Pacific, B.C.'s share is 9% with India, 13.6% with ASEAN, 28% with China/Hong Kong, 34% with Japan, 43% with Taiwan and 48% with South Korea. Provincial trade diversification efforts focus heavily on this region and 14 of 19 B.C. international Trade and Investment Offices are located in the region (4 in India, 4 in China, 1 office each in Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore and Vietnam). All are co-located within Canadian Embassies or Consulates. Premier-led and Minister-led missions to the region are resuming after a covid-connected hiatus. These missions are important in opening doors for B.C. companies, attracting investment, furthering educational and other ties and building relationships.

British Columbia is also deeply connected to the region through its large and diverse diaspora communities, including in particular those of Indian, Chinese and Filipino heritage. British Columbia also hosts large numbers of international students from India, China and other parts of the Indo-Pacific.

Canada released its long-awaited Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS) November 27, 2022. The IPS is meant to be a "generational shift" to the region, which is rapidly becoming the global centre of economic dynamism and strategic challenge.

Canada's evolving approach to China is a critical part of the IPS. It notes that "China is looking to shape the international order into a more permissive environment for interests and values that increasingly depart from ours". It also indicates that "at the same time, China's sheer size and influence makes cooperation necessary to address some of the world's existential pressures and China's economy offers significant opportunities for Canadian exporters." The IPS states that "in areas of profound disagreement, we will challenge China..." and that "we will work with China to find solutions to global issues."

The strategy highlights the importance of India, the North Pacific and ASEAN to Canada's future and describes the significant new resources that will be devoted to increasing engagement in the region and showcasing Canada as a reliable partner. Many of the IPS-linked announcements could be of significant interest to B.C. including the reinforcement of Canada's Indo-Pacific naval presence, the negotiation of new trade agreements, student scholarships and research opportunities, new resources to promote the diversification of trade in natural resources and the bolstering of visa-processing capacities in the region, to name a few.

Contact: Ken Macartney
Executive Director, International Relations, IGRS
250 217-8278

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

Title: B.C. – China Relations

Issue: B.C. – China Relations

Response:

- Like the rest of Canada, B.C. has a significant trading relationship with China.
- We also have a long-standing sister-province relationship with Guangdong Province in China, which has both economic benefits and has allowed for cooperation on issues relating to a low-carbon future, including mass timber.
- B.C. continues to attract significant numbers of international students from China and has been a major destination for Chinese tourists.
- The large and diverse communities of British Columbians of Chinese heritage have made extraordinary contributions to the fabric of this province.
- British Columbia consults closely on and follows Canada's lead in its evolving approach to relations with the government of the People's Republic of China.
- We recognize that defending Canada's national interests will at times require challenging the Chinese government on its behaviour, and that Canada will also seek to cooperate with China to find solutions to global issues such as climate change.
- Allegations of foreign interference in recent elections in Canada, including in British Columbia, are a considerable concern. Canadians deserve a thorough and independent investigation into these claims.
- B.C. supports Canada's approach to issues in Hong Kong, including support for the right to peaceful protest. B.C. shares Canada's concerns relating to the National Security Law and other laws imposed on Hong Kong.
- B.C. follows Canada's One China policy, which does not recognize Taiwan as a sovereign state, but promotes unofficial but valuable economic, cultural and people-to-people ties with Taiwan.

Background/Status:

Canada – China Relations

- The Canada-China relationship has been under strain due to a number of issues, including the past arbitrary detention of two Canadians, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor. More fundamentally, in Canada's recent Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS), China is described as "an increasingly disruptive power". The policy outlined in the IPS views those behaviours and policies of the government of China which erode the existing rules-based international order as undermining Canadian interests. At the same time, it acknowledges that China's sheer size and influence

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

makes cooperation necessary to address the world's existential pressures, such as climate change. It also notes that China's economy offers significant opportunities for Canadian exporters.

- In sum, the policy states, "In areas of profound disagreement, we will challenge China, including when it engages in coercive behaviour – economic or otherwise – ignores human rights obligations or undermines our national security interests and those of partners in the region. We will cooperate with China to find solutions to global issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss, global health and nuclear proliferation."
- Media reports over the past few months allege that the Chinese government has been involved in foreign interference in Canadian elections. In response PM Trudeau on March 6, 2023 asked the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians to study foreign interference in the 2019 and 2021 federal elections, and spoke to the Chair of the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency about a review of how Canada's national security agencies handled the threat of foreign interference in those elections. He subsequently named former governor general David Johnston as an Independent Special Rapporteur tasked with building on the work of the Committee and Review Agency and recommending additional processes, such as a formal public enquiry.

B.C. – China Relations

- B.C. businesses have connections with China across a variety of economic sectors, including clean technology, agriculture, energy and forestry.
- China and Hong Kong ranked #2 as a destination for B.C. exports behind the U.S., with B.C. exports totalling almost \$8.7 billion in 2022. 13.5% of B.C.'s commodities were shipped there.
- B.C. has four Trade and Investment offices in China, co-located in the Canadian Embassy in Beijing and in consulates in Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chongqing.
- The large and diverse multi-ethnic Chinese diaspora communities in B.C. have long made, and continue to make, valuable contributions to the economy and social fabric of B.C.
- China is a top source country for international students in B.C., and there are many successful offshore schools in China following the B.C. curriculum. B.C. also has many educational partnerships with China.

Hong Kong

- Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. It operates under the "One Country, Two Systems" principle. B.C.'s approach to Hong Kong is consistent with that of Canada's, which is to support the right to peaceful protest and autonomy under Hong Kong's Basic Law and the "One Country, Two Systems" framework.

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

- Along with fellow foreign ministers of the “Five Eyes” intelligence alliance, Canada issued a joint statement condemning the erosion of democracy in Hong Kong’s tightly-vetted Legislative Council elections which took place December 19, 2021.

Taiwan

- Under its One China Policy, Canada does not recognize Taiwan as a sovereign state or conduct government-to-government relations; however, it maintains unofficial but valuable economic, cultural and people-to-people ties. B.C. follows this approach.
- China’s military forces have carried out aggressive exercises close to Taiwan. According to the IPS, “Canada will oppose unilateral actions that threaten the status quo in the Taiwan Strait.”
- Taiwan is a key economic partner for B.C. B.C. exported over \$1 billion in goods to Taiwan in 2022, which comprised over 43% of all Canadian exports to Taiwan.
- B.C. is in the process of opening a Trade and Investment office co-located in the Canadian Trade Office in Taipei, which represents Canadian interests in Taiwan in the absence of formal diplomatic relations.

Meng Wanzhou Case

- The arrest of Huawei’s Chief Financial Officer, Meng Wanzhou, at YVR in December 2018, and the subsequent arbitrary detention of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor in China, was a significant turning point in Canada-China relations.
- On September 24th, 2021, Ms. Meng made a deal with U.S. prosecutors and returned to Shenzhen, China. The same day, Prime Minister Trudeau announced that Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor had been released and were returning to Canada.

B.C. – Guangdong

- B.C. and Guangdong formed a sister-province relationship in 1995.
- Guangdong is the ancestral homeland of a large proportion of British Columbians of Chinese heritage.
- Recent activities under this twinning arrangement have focused on the promotion of mass timber and low carbon energy.

Contact: Kenneth Macartney – 250 217-8278
Executive Director, International Relations, IGRS

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

Title: International Trade Missions

Issue: Premier-led Missions in Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Response:

- Trade missions are an effective tool to leverage economic opportunities for B.C. with our priority partners and international markets.
- This government is committed to advancing international relationships on key priorities and interest, including growing and diversifying trade and investment ties.
- As the world continues to open up post-covid, re-connecting with our international partners is more important than ever to ensure B.C. can leverage our trade and investment relationships to ensure there are good paying jobs for British Columbians.
- In fiscal year 2022-23, there were two Premier-led international missions:
 - Premier Horgan went to San Francisco on October 6th to sign a climate agreement under the auspices of the Pacific Coast Collaborative and to promote trade and investment.
 - I went to Seattle and Olympia, WA, on March 13th to advance shared priorities and the green economy.
- Planning for the 2023/24 fiscal year is evolving with priorities to be confirmed in consultation with line ministries.
- Costs associated with Premier-led missions are subject to fiscal compliance and review.

Background/Status:

Premier Horgan Mission to San Francisco - October, 6, 2022

- Premier Horgan went to San Francisco to sign a Statement of Collaboration with California, Oregon, and Washington recommitting the region to climate action, under the auspices of the Pacific Coast Collaborative. The statement focused on working together to chart a path to a cleaner energy, stronger future with good jobs and opportunities for both sides of the border.
- The program also included a meeting with the Port of San Francisco and an Investor Roundtable.

Premier Eby Mission to Seattle and Olympia, WA - March 13, 2023

Premier Eby undertook his first international visit to Washington State to meet Governor Inslee in Olympia and meet with private sector representatives in Seattle, to discuss shared priorities and the green economy.

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

Issues:

Past Missions for Fiscal 2023/24

Dates	Mission	Delegation
Oct. 5-7, 2022	San Francisco	Premier Horgan, Lindsay Byers, Jarrett Hagglund, Silas Brownsey
March 12-13, 2023	Olympia and Seattle, WA	Premier Eby, MLA Rick Glumac, Jess Smith, Aileen Machell, Silas Brownsey

Upcoming Missions for Fiscal 2023/24

Dates	Mission	Delegation	Status
May 27-June 6, 2023	Asia mission: Tokyo, Japan; Seoul, Korea; and Singapore	Premier (May 28-June 6) Minister Osborne (May 27-June 3) Minister Bailey (May 23-June 3) Minister of State Brar (May 23-June 3) Others: Matt Smith, Jessica Smith, Shannon Salter, Silas Brownsey, Leslie Teramoto, Marlene Behrens, Fazil Mihlar, William Hoyle, Shannon Baskerville	Planned

Advice/Recommendations

Mission Costs

- Mission travel costs are proactively released on the government’s website.
- Our missions are cost-effective, with a minimum of support staff and travel.

Contact: Ken Macartney 250-217-8278
Executive Director, International Relations

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

Title: Foreign Interference

Issue: Foreign interference targeting elections, elected representatives and the diaspora community

Response:

- We are deeply troubled by allegations of foreign interference in recent elections in Canada, including in British Columbia.
- Canadians deserve a thorough and independent investigation into these claims.
- It is vitally important for our democracy that our electoral system is safeguarded from foreign interference and that Canadians and British Columbians have faith in that system.
- Also of great concern are reports suggesting the targeting by Chinese government agents of Canadian elected officials and their families for taking positions in opposition to Chinese government behaviour and policy.
- It is completely unacceptable for any British Columbian or Canadian to feel threatened personally or out of concern for family members abroad, for exercising their democratic rights to express their views and concerns.
- The large and diverse communities of British Columbians of Chinese heritage have made extraordinary contributions to the fabric of this province. Those communities should feel protected and be able to count on the support of the province and all its citizens, as well as Canada's police and security agencies.
- As these reports surfaced in the media, I requested and received a briefing from CSIS in late March of this year, and remain seized of this issue.
- Our officials maintain close contact with Global Affairs Canada as well national public safety officials.
- We will be also be working with Public Safety Canada and Elections BC to help protect the integrity of upcoming elections and democratic institutions in the province.
- British Columbia consults closely on and follows Canada's lead in its evolving approach to relations with the government of the People's Republic of China.
- We recognize that defending Canada's national interests will at times require challenging the Chinese government on its behaviour.

2023/24 Estimates Note - Advice to the Premier

Background/Status:

- Media reports over the past few months allege that the Chinese government has been involved in foreign interference in Canadian elections. In response PM Trudeau on March 6, 2023 asked the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians to study foreign interference in the 2019 and 2021 federal elections, and spoke to the Chair of the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency about a review of how Canada's national security agencies handled the threat of foreign interference in those elections. He subsequently named former governor general David Johnston as an Independent Special Rapporteur tasked with building on the work of the Committee and Review Agency and recommending additional processes, such as a formal public enquiry.
- On May 8, the federal government announced the expulsion of a Chinese diplomat accused of targeting MP Michael Chong.

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