

From: [Minister, MNGD MNGD:EX](#)
To: [OHCS Correspondence Unit OHCS:EX](#)
Subject: FW: Letter from Melanie Mark, MLA-Elect Vancouver-Mount Pleasant
Date: June 14, 2017 3:54:49 PM
Attachments: [Letter to Minister Coleman re Balmoral Hotel.pdf](#)
[MMarkMLA.pdf](#)

The MO drafted and sent a response. Please log both the incoming and outgoing (attached).

From: Mark.MLA, Melanie [mailto:Melanie.Mark.MLA@leg.bc.ca]
Sent: Monday, June 5, 2017 4:42 PM
To: Minister, MNGD MNGD:EX
Cc: XT:HLTH Ramsay, Shayne; Eby.MLA, David LASS:EX
Subject: Letter from Melanie Mark, MLA-Elect Vancouver-Mount Pleasant

Greetings,

Please find attached a letter to the Honourable Rich Coleman from MLA-Elect Melanie Mark.

Sincerely,

Hilary McNaughton | Constituency Assistant | Melanie Mark, MLA-Elect Vancouver-Mount Pleasant

P: 604-660-0707 | F: 604-398-3711 | 1070-1641 Commercial Drive V5L 3Y3

www.MelanieMarkMLA.ca | [Like Melanie on Facebook!](#) | [Follow Melanie on Twitter!](#)



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Constituency Office:

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Province of
British Columbia
Legislative Assembly



Melanie Mark, MLA
(Vancouver-Mount Pleasant)

June 28, 2017

The Honourable Ellis Ross
Minister Responsible for Housing
Room 301, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

MINISTER OF NATURAL GAS DEVELOPMENT		
REFERRAL NUMBER: _____		
REPLY TO: _____		
DRAFT REPLY <input type="checkbox"/>	INFOFILE <input type="checkbox"/>	REPLY DIRECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RECEIVED JUL 04 2017		
REMARKS: <i>To Housing to reply.</i>		

Dear Minister Ross:

We wrote to your Ministry regarding s.22 in Vancouver in early March 2017. We also spoke with then Minister Coleman's executive assistant numerous times throughout March and April regarding the concerns of our constituents living in the building, particularly regarding the construction to upgrade the building envelope which began during that time. Our constituents have brought concerns to us—about the management and standards of this construction project, their health, and the health of their children living in the family townhouse units of this housing complex—since early February 2017.

I writing to you now on behalf of my constituent, s.22 is a s.22 living at s.22 s.22 s.22 in connection with the construction, and has come to us for support in obtaining a temporary transfer out of this building.

s.22 tells us:

- Her suite was supposed to be sealed tightly to prevent construction dust and materials from entering, however, there are large cracks in the seals and her belongings are consistently covered in dust;
- There is no air flow in her suite, and building management has not provided any fans or humidifiers to help improve these conditions; and that
- Since construction began,

s.22

s.2 tells us that residents at s.22 have been given \$10 gift certificates to Tim Hortons twice weekly to make up for the inconvenience of being sealed in their suites while construction progresses. Meanwhile, she and others are seeing significant health declines, facing costs for services that have been interrupted, and the resident concerns we have previously outlined remain outstanding.

s.22 is requesting immediate support to improve her suite's air quality, and a timely transfer to a unit in another building. She is hoping for a temporary transfer, with a guarantee of being able to return to her home after construction is complete.

I urge you to consult with residents to see if others with health challenges need be accommodated in a similar way. I also ask that you review the work being done by BC Housing contractors to improve work quality and the living conditions of residents who will remain in the building for the duration of construction.

I look forward to your timely response on this matter.

Respectfully,



Melanie Mark
Hli Haykwhl Wii Xsgaak
馬蘭妮
MLA, Vancouver-Mount Pleasant

MM: CR

 bcgeu

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**Province of
British Columbia
Legislative Assembly**



Melanie Mark, MLA
(Vancouver-Mount Pleasant)

June 5, 2017

Dear Minister Coleman:

Re: Balmoral Hotel mass eviction

As you are aware, the very vulnerable residents of the Balmoral Hotel are being mass evicted because the building has been deemed unsafe for occupation by the City of Vancouver. The City is pursuing a Standards of Maintenance sanction against the owners of the property, doing the necessary repairs and billing the repairs required to the owners through the property tax system if the owners refuse to pay.

I am advised that approximately 120 of the 150 residents in the building are currently sheltered homeless at best. Some may be actually homeless.

BC Housing has apparently been completely absent. If they have been involved, there has been no improvement in the situation faced by Balmoral residents as a result of their involvement.

The executive committee of government, of which you are a part, is still in control of the government of BC and Christy Clark is still the Premier. One of the reasons for you retaining this legacy power despite the change in government that is coming is to ensure government is able to respond to emergencies. The closure of the Balmoral making 150 people homeless is an emergency. I insist that you direct BC Housing to respond appropriately to this emergency by providing badly needed emergency housing.

In addition, I would like to take this opportunity to note how shameful it is that despite your government being in power for the last 16 years, and you being housing minister for the better part of a decade, we are repeating an identical emergency involving the exact same landlords of yet another of their low-income buildings which is unsafe for people to live in. In 2008, the roof of another building owned by the owners of the Balmoral collapsed.

Despite having nine years to respond to the gap in provincial and municipal laws that emergency made obvious, you have given the city no additional powers, the province has no additional powers, and there was no crackdown on the Sahotas in 2008. Instead, the province continued to pay the rent, for years and years and years at the Balmoral while the building degraded further and further. Your government did this even while knowing that the roof fell in at another Sahota building, and that something similar was bound to happen at the poorly maintained Balmoral Hotel.

In case you are inclined to respond that your government has built additional social housing units and so is not responsible for the crisis at the Balmoral, please don't bother. Your own reports to CMHC indicate that

the Christy Clark government built even less social housing than Gordon Campbell's BC Liberals did, which is a statistic that surely explains why there are now more than 70 tent cities across Metro Vancouver, and growing homeless populations across the province.

Do your part to ensure at least that the residents of the Balmoral are not forced to join one of these already rapidly growing tent cities.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melanie Mark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Melanie Mark

Hli Haykwhl Wii Xsgaak

馬蘭妮.

MLA, Vancouver-Mount Pleasant

CC: Shayne Ramsey, David Eby (via email)



JUN 12 2017

Melanie Mark, MLA
1070-1641 Commercial Drive
Vancouver, BC
V5L 3Y3

Dear Ms. Mark,

I am responding to your June 5 letter regarding the evacuation of the Balmoral Hotel due to the unsafe condition of the building.

Contrary to the assertions made in your letter, BC Housing has been very involved in this situation, working closely with the City of Vancouver to find alternative accommodation for the residents of the Balmoral Hotel. As a result of their work, housing has been found for all 128 tenants. BC Housing is working with the City and non-profit housing providers to make this transition as easy as possible for tenants.

With regards to maintenance standards, local governments have authority to establish and enforce maintenance standards for existing buildings through the Community Charter. In Vancouver, this authority is established under the Vancouver Charter. Municipalities can levy fines, conduct inspections, approve permits and licences, identify unsafe conditions and require repairs to be done where needed. It is these powers which allowed the City of Vancouver to take action in the case of the Balmoral Hotel.

Sincerely,

Rich Coleman

Minister and Deputy Premier

CC: Shayne Ramsey
David Eby

Minister of
Natural Gas Development
and Minister Responsible
for Housing
and Deputy Premier

Office of the Minister

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