

ACKNOWLEDGE

Hon. STEVE THOMSON

DON BANASKY, President, TLA

BILL MARKVOORT, Past President, TLA

Thank you.

I'd like to talk to you about B.C.'s founding industry, and how you're responding and adapting to changing times.

About the resource economy, and what sharing the wealth it creates allows us to do as a society.

About how together, we are turning challenges into opportunity.

What we're doing to improve safety, and attract the next generation of forestry workers.

But first, I want to share with you something that struck me over the holidays.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

I took my son to India to help build a school.

A bit of an adjustment for a 13 year old boy from BC.

It's hard to find chicken fingers and pizza pockets there...

Someone asked him how he enjoyed our trip, and he said
"Well...I think my mom is a bit more adaptable than me."

I hope what he experienced there stays with him through
the years...helps him to become a man who has an
understanding of the world we live in.

Because there are places in the world where people can't
afford to send their kids to school. They need them to stay
at home. They need their kids around...just to survive the
day.

Even if that means sacrificing that child's future.

We are lucky to have this big society...to have the luxury of looking far into our future for our kids.

It wasn't like that years ago. And it may not be that way for people arriving today, to build a future in BC.

That's why your industry's success is such an important part of BC's history and our future.

A hundred years ago the Comox Logging Company decided they wanted long-term workers from the community...instead of short term hires from somewhere else.

And companies like Comox across our province built communities by investing in them.

When you succeed...entire communities succeed.

That's why we've taken steps to protect you if luck turns against you.

As you know, in 2010 we established the Forestry Services Providers Protection Act to protect contractors and service providers.

In five years, it's been used once. The fund is now sitting at \$5.2 million.

I said Truck Loggers don't have to pay into this...
And I meant it.

Yes, times are tight. Yes, it will take time...
But we remain committed to funding this.

I hope it's never used again – but it will be there if you need it.

NEW LANDSCAPE

As communities have grown in BC, we have the benefit of a strong and diverse economy that has grown up around your industry.

That protects us against a single commodity downturn – which you're seeing elsewhere.

All industries have to be adaptable.

The world changes quickly – take the price of oil, or the collapse of the US housing market.

In BC, we've weathered global economic problems better than most because time and time again, we've adapted.

We've rolled with the punches, and found opportunity in challenges.

Forestry is no different. Almost 15 years ago, you made the decision to diversify your client base, and not depend on the United States exclusively.

It was a long process, and there were bumps on the road.

But it was more than worth it.

Last year, the landscape changed again.

There were some who saw the Supreme Court decision on Tsilhqot'in title as a potential roadblock to economic development.

And if we handled it the wrong way – it might have been.

Instead, we saw it as an opportunity to build a better partnership.

It started with a historic meeting between my cabinet and leaders of First Nations – the first time ever, and long overdue.

But to really build a better partnership – to fully include First Nations in our growing economy – it can't just be government.

For 200 years, we've done a great job creating wealth from resources. And for 200 years, we've done a lousy job sharing that with First Nations.

That's going to change.

It starts with agreements. Since 2002, your government has signed over 250 significant agreements with First Nations, from history-making treaties and reconciliation agreements, to economic development agreements.

That's why I'm so pleased to see the TLA lead the way.

The TLA was one of the first organizations to endorse and support the Supreme Court decision.

You have a special Aboriginal Affairs Committee helping bridge any divides that may appear.

Because in many ways, it confirmed what you had already learned in places like Haida Gwaii:

If First Nations are involved from the start – planning, permitting, and development agreements...

It creates sustainable, more dependable relationships.

They make for better investments.

SAFETY

And the biggest investment of all, of course, is your people.

Everyone in this room knows...

Being a logger is a bit tougher than sitting at a desk.

But it doesn't have to be dangerous.

That's why, ten years ago, industry leadership, from contractors to unions to government, collectively took the challenge to reduce serious injuries and fatalities.

Quite simply, this saved lives.

There has been almost a two thirds decrease in fatalities.

The in-the-woods forest industry used to account for about 1 in 8 of the worker fatalities in BC; now it has dropped to closer to 1 in 17.

Let's keep working.

Let's make 2015 the year it gets to zero.

Because not only is it the right thing to do – it'll make forestry more competitive.

It'll be easier to attract young workers – who have a lot of options right now.

SKILLS TRAINING

Because there's a big demographic shift coming.

Between now and 2022, there will be 4,700 job openings in forestry – and 95% are due to pending retirement.

Three quarters of those openings are in job categories that already have high vacancy rates.

So if nothing changes – you'll face a manpower crisis.

That's why we provided over \$1 million to the forest sector to support the development of human resource strategies and address skills training shortages.

We'll continue to do our part. The Skills and Training Plan includes \$75 million to improve training facilities and equipment...

And \$100 million in direct support for skilled trades training through the Industry Training Authority.

The Skills and Training Plan isn't three years old, but we're already seeing results.

The Association for Mineral Exploration recently completed a \$425,000 program with Northwest Community College...

26 people received training to work in exploration camps, forestry operations, and as assistants to environmental contractors.

It's good to see the TLA working with the Coast Forest Products Association working together towards province-wide solutions.

And I know you will continue to work with Shirley Bond on funding mechanisms to help with:

- Recruitment
- Identifying training needs for specific jobs.
- Certification for training
- And who will be best to deliver that training.

WORKERS COME HOME

Because if we connect people with opportunity – entire communities thrive.

I wonder how many people in this room moved away from home to seek their opportunity in the resource sector.

How many came west across the Rockies from elsewhere in Canada.

And like you, there have been thousands of British Columbians who followed opportunity east, maybe to work in the oil patch.

And maybe – they're feeling a little uncertain right now.

I would say to them:
Now's the time to come home.

Because BC needs you.
Right now.

We need you for construction, and for mining – and soon, LNG.

And we really need you in forestry.

Like those locals Comox Valley Logging decided to hire almost 100 years, we want you to come home, set down roots...

Truck Loggers

January 22, 2015

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

And as your families grow...

Entire communities grow...

Our economy grows...

And an entire province thrives.

ACNOWLEDGE:

Minister Bill Bennett

Minister Shirley Bond

MLA Mike Morris

s.22

Every day, our resource sector contributes to building healthy, vibrant communities right across B.C.

The mining industry has gone a step further with the Mining for Miracles Campaign.

In over 20 years, they have raised more than \$23 million to support the BC Children's Hospital.

Today, I'm proud to kick off the 2015 Mining for Miracles Fundraising Campaign here in Prince George...
The first time ever outside Vancouver.

In 2015 and 2016, the mining industry plans to raise another \$3 million to further strengthen care for kids and families.

With a matching commitment of up to \$1 million from Genome BC, Mining for Miracles will establish the new CAUSES Clinic...

Which will provide advanced DNA testing to help diagnose mystery illnesses affecting children.

The CAUSES Clinic will provide these tests to at least 500 children over the next 3 years...

Finding answers for illnesses that might otherwise have gone undiagnosed...

And reducing the average number of tests needed for a diagnosis from 10 to just 1.

This will save kids and their families time and money from missed work and travel.

Kids like ^{s.22}

^{s.22} has courageously traveled a tough road through ^{s.22}

Thanks to BC Children's Hospital, ^{s.22} is back at school and playing hockey.

ACKNOWLEDGE:

Shirley Bond

Mike Morris

I want to talk to you today about the changing world, about opportunities and challenges for BC's traditional industries.

Industries that have sustained the people of British Columbia from the very beginning.

MEN OF ENERGY AND INDUSTRY

In our first days as a province, the legislative assembly used to publish a handbook of British Columbia.

Towards the back of the 1908 version, there's a small section called "advice to immigrants."

There is no country within the British Empire which offers more inducements to men of energy and industry than British Columbia.

To the practical farmer, miner, lumberman, fisherman, horticulturalist, and dairyman it offers a comfortable living and ultimate independence.

Skilled mechanics and labourers will also find plenty of opportunity.

But then, there's a warning:

The man without a trade is warned that his chances for employment are by no means good.

Some things have changed.

First, those inducements are still there, but they're open to men and women of every colour and creed.

That's progress.

Second, in 64 pages, the handbook makes only passing references to First Nations. We still have a long way to go, but we're taking steps towards ensuring First Nations are full partners in economic development.

That's progress.

Third, we've diversified our economy. In BC our strength in so many diverse sectors means we have protected BC from being dependent on a single market or single commodity downturn.

That's progress.

But it's striking how some things never change.

In 1908, natural resources were the only game in town.

Whether you were born here, or had just arrived, natural resources offered the only real chance to build a career.

A lucrative career.

A career to support a family.

But those unexpected changes are ones that we will adapt to, even find opportunity in.

You may have heard I took my son to India over Christmas to help build a school. That posed some challenges...some lifestyle changes for Hamish.

When India got too difficult for my 13 year old son, we didn't quit our charity work, we found a McDonalds and a Pizza Hunt and we stayed the part, we stuck with our plan.

And that's what we're doing in BC.

Fiscal responsibility and controlling spending. Next month, we're going to introduce our third consecutive balanced budget.

Who else has done that across this country?

But then, who else has worked so hard to create a diverse economy?

The second part of our plan is growing our economy. creating jobs while protecting the environment.

Just like it was in 1908 – it starts with a healthy resource sector.

The third part of our plan is to make sure British Columbians benefit from that economic growth, with skills training for jobs.

Balanced budgets in an uncertain world.

A healthy resource sector to grow our economy.

Benefits for British Columbians.

Those three things are linked.

Just seven years ago, resource revenues in British Columbia were over \$2 billion.

Today, they're around \$470 million.

That's why we need to grow the economy.

A billion and a half gone.

To work with First Nations and communities

Address their concerns...

And get to “yes” on economic development.

RESOURCE EDUCATION

So I would say to all of you in this room:

The reason Vancouver has social housing isn't because of socialism.

It's because at this very moment, there's someone mining for coal in the Elk Valley.

The reason B.C. has the best cancer survival rates in the world is because we have some of the best researchers and facilities in Vancouver. It's the same with HIV and AIDS. We had the dollars to make that investment

because someone was cutting down a tree on Vancouver Island or extracting Natural Gas in Fort St. John.

Rural B.C. generates wealth through the resource sector. Urban B.C. invests that wealth into services that benefit the entire province.

We have to strengthen that bond.

FIRST NATIONS

The other bond we have to strengthen is with First Nations.

Last year's Supreme Court decision presented us – all of us – with a unique opportunity.

A chance to build a better, more stable, and fair partnership with B.C.'s first peoples.

It starts with discussion. That's why I invited leaders from all of BC's First Nations to Vancouver to meet with my cabinet – for the first time, ever.

It starts with agreements. Since 2006, the provincial government has signed over 250 significant agreements with First Nations.

They range from history-making treaties and reconciliation agreements, to economic development agreements.

Every one of them is a step in the right direction...

In BC for 200 years we've done a good job of creating wealth from resources, we've done a lousy job of sharing it with First Nations.

That's going to change.

SKILLS TRAINING

Connecting young people with skills and training has never been more important.

Of the one million new jobs by 2022, close to half will be in trades and technical professions.

That's why we launched the Skills for Jobs Blueprint last year.

We aren't even one year into a 10-year plan – but in that short time, we've made significant progress.

- With an investment of \$6.8 million, we created more than 1,400 new seats for trades training. Wait times have been reduced by an average of eight months.
- And there's over \$16 thousand available per student for help to study in-demand trades.
- Construction is underway at two new trades training facilities – at Okanagan College in Kelowna, and Camosun College in Victoria.
- We've increased the number of Apprenticeship Advisors to connect employers with people who want real work experience.

Last year, we said we would re-engineer our secondary and post-secondary institutions.

And we've been doing it the only sensible way: backwards.

We worked with industry, identified the jobs we need to train for, and worked our way back.

To make sure British Columbians can get started today on their career for tomorrow.

We have a plan to get British Columbians trained and ready to help build our economic destiny.

That's why today I'm announcing \$375,000 for the College of New Caledonia to purchase new trades training equipment.

This is in addition to 72 new trades training seats announced last year at New Caledonia...

And over 1,400 new critical trades training seats since we launched the Blueprint last year.

In 1908, apparently you needed to be a man of energy and industry to get here and find opportunity – that's changed too.

Now, students just need to ask for help.

Over 16 thousand in non-repayable grants while studying trades most in demand.

That includes \$4,000 for students to relocate to a community outside the Lower Mainland...

And let me say to all of you here:
That's the role government can play.

But only you can hire apprentices and give them an opportunity – and you need to do it.

I will do my job. But I can't do it alone.

FORESTRY

No industry touches as many British Columbians as much as Forestry: 58 000 Jobs- many in very small communities – we need it to succeed.

For most of our history as a province, our timber industry was beholden to the US market – and regulation.

And when the US economy went into recession, we made a decision to work with our forestry industry to diversify our markets.

And it has paid off, with exports to China alone increasing 20 times over.

And 2015 is another pivotal year.

Nine years ago, the governments of Canada and the United States set aside their differences on softwood lumber and came to an agreement.

That agreement is set to expire in October.

We're working closely with our partners in Ottawa as they continue to negotiate with their counterparts in Washington.

Because while we've had great success expanding our client base – the US isn't going anywhere.

In fact, it's starting to show signs of rebounding. And as their housing construction market returns to normal – that's an enormous opportunity.

We need to grow our exports to the US in traditional wood products.

We also need to continue to innovate.

For example, it's estimated the global demand for bio-products will reach \$200 billion per year.

There are now 13 plants and two terminals producing wood pellets – they're going to be busy.

But if you want to see the best example of BC's evolving forestry industry – just look across the street.

The Wood Innovation and Design Centre is welcoming Emily Carr University of Art and Design.

The Emily Carr Centre for Design Innovation and Entrepreneurship will focus on education in art and design, applied research, innovation, and manufacturing with wood and wood products.

Our forest industry has established a worldwide brand as a sustainable industry and the work they're doing right across the street is going to help us continue to fight global climate change and create jobs at home.

MINING

Like forestry, mining has a long and proud history in BC.

Like forestry, our mining business is the most sustainable in the world.

And like forestry, it's also a multigenerational industry.

And like forestry, it's resilient.

Looks what's happening on Nisga'a Lands near Stewart. The Nisga'a have already signed a comprehensive benefits agreement.

If approved, the KSM mine will create some 1,800 jobs during construction, and 1,400 full-time jobs for the next 52 years.

It would be the largest mine in the province.

There are more than 30,000 British Columbians working in the mining industry – and with an average salary of over \$114,000, it's not hard to see why.

We are more than halfway towards achieving our Jobs Plan goals of eight new mines and nine mine expansions by 2015.

Since June 2011, five new metal mines have opened in B.C. creating over 1,300 new full-time jobs.

And when Red Chris opens soon, that's another 300 new jobs.

It's important to remember – it's not just a rural industry. Vancouver alone boasts 1,000 mining companies.

But mining does more for the Lower Mainland than jobs and money. It's saving lives.

One of the biggest donors to the BC Children's Hospital is the mining industry – over \$60 million in the last 25 years.

Later today, I'm proud to help announce this year's Mining for Miracles Campaign will be here in Prince George – for the first time ever outside of Vancouver.

But with the good news there are also challenges...

I know you're looking forward to hearing from the Independent panel into Mount Polley. And the inquest into the Babine and Lakeland tragedies.

I am too.

Our resource industries have some of the highest standards in the world.

We have to find out what happened and why.

If there are any findings that make them better and safer – we're going to do it.

LNG

Forestry is doing well, new mines are opening and the biggest opportunity is still to come: LNG.

Yes the price of oil continues to surprise, but here's what we've seen in LNG:

- Progress on the work we're doing with Shell continues to proceed- on plan and on schedule.
- Exxon decided they want to be first or second in getting a project up and running.
- CNOOC take a better position in land, improving its chances to go ahead.
- And AltaGas and Idemitsu are continuing to move ahead with their project.
- Woodside has expanded its investment by buying out Apache.

From our end we've done everything we can to make BC competitive. We've adjusted our tax rates. We've met every deadline for permitting. We've ensured the highest environmental and safety standards.

For companies that are diversified between oil and gas, the low price of oil presents complex problems.

So will BC's LNG industry follow the exact script we originally laid out? No.

But we're still going to get there because we are adaptable and we have a plan.

WORKERS COME HOME

I wonder how many people in this room moved away from home to seek their opportunity in the resource sector.

How many came west across the Rockies from elsewhere in Canada.

And like you, there have been thousands of British Columbians who moved east, maybe to work in the oil patch.

And maybe – they're feeling a little uncertain right now.

I would say to them: now's the time to come home.

Because BC needs you.
Right now.

LNG hasn't gotten off the ground yet and we already need you.

We need you for forestry and mining.

We need you for construction.

We need you to take your place in a growing economy in your home.

So come home. Opportunity isn't just knocking...it's sending you a welcome basket.

Just as in 1908 BC is a place for ambitious people who wanted to build a career and a family.

We are a diverse economy that's better protected from the cyclical ups and downs of a single commodity.

And we have even bigger, new opportunity ahead:

We are ready for those opportunities.

And to everyone in the rest of Canada I say – Watch us grow.

This is where the action is.

ACKNOWLEDGE:

Minister Bill Bennett

Gavin Dirom

Thank you.

I want to talk to you today about mining in BC – the past, present, and future.

About the resource economy, and how we're always going to depend on it – but especially in a changing world.

But first, I understand Gavin Dirom has been trying to shop around a new slogan for BC mining...

And I'm almost embarrassed to share it, but here goes:

"We built this city on rock and coal."

I think it needs a little more work.

And what it lacks in humour, it makes up for in accuracy.

Because it's true.

Not only did mining build towns like Kimberley, Cranbrook, and Trail...

But it's a crucial part of a growing, diverse economy that supports the entire province.

Vancouver doesn't have social housing because of socialism – it's because of mining in the Elk Valley.

Because of the revenue it generates, but also because Vancouver is a mining hub.

60% of the mineral exploration done in the world is done by Canadians – and the majority of the companies doing it?

They're based right here in Vancouver.

In years past, we were lucky and wise enough to diversify our economy.

We're not reliant on a single commodity.

BC isn't big enough to affect global commodity prices. They're completely beyond our control.

So if you rely on a single product, and it crashes, as we've seen with oil...

You're in trouble.

RENAISSANCE

But luckily for us in BC....mining is going through a renaissance.

You don't need me to remind you what happened to mining in the '90s.

And even though you got knocked down, you got right back up.

In the past 3 and a half years, we have opened 5 mines, and expanded 7.

I know commodity prices are low right now – and for many of you times are tough.

But if there's one thing I know it's that BC's mining industry is resilient – and your best days are ahead of you

In 2001, BC had one mining project in its EA process – today we have over 30.

And with the completion of the Northwest Transmission Line...

We've opened up a huge quadrant of this province that was not on the grid.

We've opened it up to exploration.

The pessimists called it a “power line to nowhere.”

That may be easy to say in Kitsilano.

But tell that to the First Nations in the northwest, trying to compete in the 21st century digital economy, hamstrung with insufficient power and no high-speed internet.

Tell that to the 300-plus people who will be making good money – a job you can raise a family on – at Red Chris Mine.

Tell that to the people excited about eight major projects in the region – none of which were possible before the NTL.

SITE C

The Northwest Transmission Line shows the transformative power of low-cost electricity.

It builds our province...
it drives resource development forward.

That's why we recently decided to build the Site C Project – to provide a century of affordable, reliable and clean power that will grow our economy

In the life of any province, there are moments where each of us, has an opportunity, a responsibility to make big decisions – ones that are going to matter

Site C is one of those decisions – it will make a real difference for 100 years – for so many people.

NEW LANDSCAPE

Recently, two mines made some news for progress they made in the EA process – New Prosperity and Tulsequah Chief.

As you know, they were both the subject of some controversy.

And I've been asked – in the spirit of the Tsilqhot'in Decision, how can this proceed?

We're going to keep making decisions based on principle.

For over 100 years, we've done a great job developing resources in BC.

And for over 100 years, we haven't done a great job sharing that with First Nations – or making them part of the process.

We're working to change that.

Part of that is building on past successes – we were the first province in Canada to share mineral royalties with First Nations.

11 of 16 metal and coal mines have benefit agreements with First Nations.

We're going to continue down the path we started walking last year, when we convened the first meeting between all First Nations leaders and my Cabinet.

The first of many.

And we're going to work with First Nations to become full partners in economic development.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

And because mining plays such a key role in our economy, we're redoubling our efforts to support it.

Next month, we're going to introduce our third consecutive balanced budget in tough economic times.

And in it, we're going to extend the mining flow-through share tax credit program for 2015 – so that you can raise the revenue you need to keep making important resource discoveries here in BC.

I can also tell you that we are committed to extending the New Mine Allowance to 2020 – to support new mines and major expansions by allowing them to deduct 133 % of their capital costs.

That's important because in the next few years, we could see up to 10 new mines proceed in British Columbia.

Mines like Avanti's Kitsault project which received its environmental assessment certificate in March 2013 that could employ 300 workers for over 15 years.

Or Seabridge Gold's KSM project which received its environmental assessment certificate this past July that could employ over 1,000 workers for over 50 years.

Or Pretium's Brucejack project – currently in the EA process – that could employ 350 workers for over 20 years.

This is a significant opportunity for our province – to create thousands of jobs, and to build communities.

And we need to make sure we deliver.

That's why, today, I'm pleased to announce that funding to the mining division will be increased by approximately \$4 million per year.

\$3 million of that will come from new permitting fees for large-scale operating mines.

And absolutely zero dollars will come from mineral exploration companies.

Because operating mines are making money. Prospectors aren't – at least, not yet.

These fees are the result of extensive consultations. You told us while no one likes to pay fees...

You were willing to pay more if it meant you got better service.

So we're going to take that money, and we're going to do two things:

First, we're going to establish a Major Mines Permitting Office.

It will improve coordination across government, and make the permitting process more efficient.

Second, we're going to increase resources so that we have more boots on the ground, performing more inspections.

In the wake of Mount Polley, we have greater responsibility to work together to ensure mining can be done safely...

And that people's real concerns are being addressed.

So we're stepping up our game.

Because it's the right thing to do...

and also because it makes BC an even better investment.

WORKERS COME HOME

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BC is a place for ambitious people who want to build a career and a family.

We are a diverse economy that's better protected from the cyclical ups and downs of a single commodity.

And we have even bigger, new opportunity ahead in LNG:

We are ready for those opportunities.

And to everyone in the rest of Canada I say – Watch us grow.

This is where the action is.

Part of the reason for that is mining is back – they tried to kill it in the '90s, but it just didn't work.

You can't blame the NDP for being frustrated.

Just think:

- gas is under a dollar a litre;
- the presidential election might be Clinton vs. Bush;
- and the X-Files might start filming in Vancouver again.

The '90s are back.

And even they don't want the NDP in power again.

Thank you.

- END -

Note: Call up Minister Bennett to help present the framed proclamation for Mineral Exploration Week to David McLelland and Gavin Dirom of AME BC.

ACKNOWLEDGE:

Hon. Suzanne Anton (MC)

Hon. Stephanie Cadieux

Judy Villeneuve, Acting Mayor of Surrey

Sonya Boyce, Exec. Director, Surrey Women's Centre
Society

Chief Supt. Bill Fordy. Surrey RCMP

Thank you.

I'd like to start with some sobering numbers.

- Over the past 10 years in British Columbia, 113 women have lost their lives as a result of domestic violence.
- In just the past year, police handled well over 12,000 cases of intimate partner violence and more than 3,000 sexual assaults.

- Aboriginal women are nearly three times as likely as others to become victims of spousal violence.

These are our mothers, daughters, sisters, friends and neighbours.

And it's not just a women's issue; it's everyone's issue. The trauma ripples through workplaces, homes and entire communities.

Today, I am announcing today the launch of the Violence Free BC Strategy - a long-term commitment to help keep women safe.

This strategy is our roadmap.

It's about three lines of defence:

Preventing violence from taking place;
Responding when it does, including help to escape violent situations;
And finally, helping women rebuild their lives.

Every year, up to \$3 million in civil forfeiture funds will be dedicated to the Violence Free BC Strategy, including a public awareness campaign.

We will introduce school-based prevention programs, teaching students that coercion, violence and discrimination against girls are unacceptable.

And we will partner with other levels of government to specifically target violence against Aboriginal women.

We're not starting from scratch. The strategy is a framework that will allow us to build on measures and programs like:

- The 3-year Domestic Violence Plan;
- A Memorandum of Understanding with Aboriginal leaders to address violence against Aboriginal women;
- More than \$70 million invested every year in prevention and intervention services; and
- The continuing work on the recommendations of the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry.

We have also seen the opening of the Domestic Violence Unit in Kelowna.

And I'm pleased that today we're adding another, the newly integrated RCMP Surrey Domestic Violence Unit.

They will provide an integrated police and support worker response to reduce domestic violence and provide support and assistance to victims.

Today's announcements are part of the role government can play towards a violence-free future.

But if we're going to get there, it has to be more than just government.

We need everyone on board.
Speaking up. Speaking out.
Putting a stop to bad behaviour.
Lending support where it's needed.

And recognizing that real change is possible.

If we work together, all of us...

We can make a better future.

Thank You.

—END—

ACKNOWLEDGE:

MLA Dan Ashton

Greg Reimer, executive vice-president of transmission and distribution, BC Hydro

West Kelowna Mayor Doug Findlater

We rely on electricity. Not just for entertainment. To cook, to get up and go to work every day.

The existing line into the West Kelowna area has provided reliable power for decades.

But this line is vulnerable:

Wildfires in summer;

Snow and ice in the winter;

Mudslides in spring and fall.

On October 1st, of last year, 22,000 homes in West Kelowna, Peachland and Summerland were plunged into darkness for 9 hours.

We can't predict every major outage. But we can ensure we have the best possible system in place.

That's why I'm happy to announce that BC Hydro will build a new 138-kilovolt transmission line to continue to deliver clean, reliable power to West Kelowna, Westside and Peachland.

The new line will strengthen and reinforce the existing network.

The first phase of this project begins with consultation. First Nations and the broader community will have input on the three different route options, which will affect timing and cost of the project.

From the 1960s to 1980s, BC Hydro built dams, generating stations, substations, and thousands of kilometres of transmission and distribution lines...

That's why we have reliable power today.

Decades later, it's essential that we maintain, upgrade, and expand the electricity system to meet current and future needs.

Over the next 10 years, we will invest an average of \$2.4 billion per year.

These investments are necessary to meet growing demand...

But at the same time, we need to keep hydro rates as low as possible.

With our 10-year plan in place for BC Hydro rates, we're ensuring upgrades and additions are made in a cost-effective way.

BC enjoys the 3rd-lowest electricity rates in North America – something to be proud of.

The demand for electricity in B.C. is expected to grow by as much as 40% over the next 20 years.

Even with an aggressive conservation plan – we will still need to make new investments to meet growing demand

That's why we are investing now.
Because as the economy grows...
and as communities grow with it...

The power supply has to keep up.

West Kelowna transmission line announcement
Feb. 5, 2015
CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you.

—END—

ACKNOWLEDGE:

Counsul General LIU Fei (Host)

The histories of British Columbia and China are closely woven together.

Since the earliest days of our province, Chinese immigrants helped to build the British Columbia we know today.

At first, they did so in difficult and unjust circumstances.

Today, we value British Columbians of Chinese heritage as neighbours, colleagues, and friends.

You excel in every field of achievement. You make our communities better and richer.

The relationship between British Columbia and China is strong, and growing every single day.

It's not only natural resources and manufactured goods, where the volume of our trade is unprecedented.

It's not just finance...where BC was the first foreign jurisdiction to issue bonds in the renminbi market.

We also exchange people, cultures, and ideas.

Last year, there were over 25,000 international students from China studying at BC universities and colleges.

Many of them will stay in BC and continue their lives here, contributing to our society and economy.

Others will return to China, with new knowledge of what BC has to offer.

Even greater opportunities lie ahead.

Our cultural and commercial relationships are strong...but we will make them even stronger.

By developing a liquefied natural gas industry, we will help power China's growth...and protect the environment on both sides of the Pacific.

As we approach the Year of the Goat, we know there will be challenges to face.

But the opportunities are far greater, if we seize them.

And together, I know we will.

Kung Hei Fat Choi...Gong Xi Fa Cai.

Let me wish you a happy and prosperous new year.

Welcome to the 25th Canada Winter Games in the great city of Prince George, British Columbia.

British Columbia is a place where we celebrate doing your best.

Where we encourage our kids to work hard towards their biggest dreams.

Where we do everything we can to give them that opportunity.

Over the next 18 days, we will see 2,400 of Canada's best young athletes competing for top honours in 19 different sports, including Paralympic sports and events for Special Olympics athletes.

And we may soon be cheering for some of them as they represent Canada at the PyeongChang Olympics in 2018.

I want to thank our partners in helping to make these Games a reality:

- The City and the people of Prince George.

The years of planning have paid off.

What a way to celebrate your 100th anniversary...showing off your community spirit and the beauty of this region.

- The 2015 Canada Winter Games Host Society
- The Canada Games Council
- Our First Nations hosts, the Lheidli T'enneh (Clayt-Clay-Ten-ay)
The first ever Official Host Nation for a Canada Games.
- And the Friends of the Games.

So many people...organizers, staff, and volunteers...have been working hard to make sure the first ever Canada Winter Games held in BC are an unforgettable experience.

Thank you for that work, and congratulations.

The BC government has invested more than \$12 million in the 2015 Canada Winter Games.

That investment will have an economic impact of \$70 to \$90 million in this region. And it will showcase Prince George and British Columbia to Canadians across this country.

5 years ago, BC hosted the largest, most successful sporting event in our history...the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

How many of us can forget Team Canada's victories in front of the home team crowd...and how we celebrated the achievements of our Canadian athletes.

We showed them just how strongly we support them.

In the next two weeks, we will do the same.

But we will do more than cheer.

The performance of our emerging top athletes encourages individuals to get active...

to take on new challenges...

to participate in sports in their communities...

And lead healthier lives.

In 2014-15 alone, the BC government is investing close to \$50 million in sport, including:

- Close to \$11 million for sport participation programs that ensure young British Columbians at all levels of ability and interest can get involved.

- \$7 million for high performance sport... including more than \$3.5 million for the 350 athletes, coaches and mission staff who make up Team BC at these games.
- And more than \$3 million to host sporting events like these Games.

To the athletes, I say this. Each one of you is a role model.

You embody the values that serve us well in both sports and life.

Commitment.

Tenacity.

Respect.

And after all your hard work preparing for your moment in the spotlight...remember that today is just the beginning.

The beginning of your journeys ...

The beginning of your dreams ...

The beginning of memories that will last a lifetime.

We are proud of you. We'll be cheering for you.

Now I'd like to invite the Canada Games flag to enter the arena...

And, once again, welcome the 25th Canada Winter Games to Prince George, BC.

-END-

February 17, 2015

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

ACKNOWLEDGE:

Her Honour Judith Guichon, Lieutenant Governor

Hon. Linda Reid, Speaker

John Horgan

Members of the Legislative Assembly

- Honoured to be here to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the National Flag of Canada, and the 150th Anniversary of Government House.
- The process to choose our flag was contentious...but Canadians proved we can have fierce disagreements and still build a stronger, better country together.
- Government House: since 1865, the 3 different buildings on this site have hosted distinguished guests...royalty, heads of state, household names.
- More importantly, Government House is a ceremonial home for all British Columbians...the people who shape our province every day by their endeavours.
- The New Medal of Good Citizenship, announced in Throne Speech, will recognize those everyday contributions...deeds for the common good done without expectation of reward.

ACKNOWLEDGE

Minister Peter Fassbender (introducing)
Donavan and Wynn (student emcees)
Travis Price (Pink Shirt Day co-founder)
MLAs

Today is the 8th annual Pink Shirt Day in British Columbia.

I was amazed by the response in 2008. But even more so by how it has grown in the years since then.

Today...with our young people leading the way...our whole province turns pink.

They set an example for all of us to follow.

This is the day when we all stand together and speak with one voice to say that bullying... wherever it happens...will not be tolerated.

Not only do these students want to see a change...they are the change.

And they are an essential part of our ERASE Bullying strategy.

ERASE is about putting tools into the hands of educators, parents and students to help make every school a safe and positive place to learn.

The ERASE Student Advisory group has been meeting for the past year to create guidelines for students, parents and educators on how to use social media ethically and responsibly.

And, as we just heard, they have now completed those guidelines.

Congratulations to Donovan and Wynn and all of the Student Advisory members for making this important contribution.

And it will take all of us to end bullying. I'm proud to stand here today, not only with our students...

But also with Warren Perks and Trish Wilson from the BC Construction Association.

As adults...we need to set a good example.
Bullying isn't just an issue for our young people.
It happens in homes...and it happens in workplaces.

This is an issue that affects all of us.
So we all need to take a stand against bullying in every
form.

That's the message and the power of Pink Shirt Day –
together we are strong.

And...together...we will erase bullying.