

ACKNOWLEDGE:

Preston Manning (moderator)
Premier Jim Prentice
Premier Darrell Pasloski

It's great to be here with you.

I don't get to Ontario very often. I've been pretty busy back at home.

I became Premier in 2011. BC had been hit by the great recession, and our budget was in the red.

We got government spending under control. We took a hard look at services to see how we could deliver them better, more efficiently...instead of raising taxes.

And three years ago, we balanced our budget.

The Globe and Mail reported on it. I believe they ran that story on page A24.

A couple weeks ago, we balanced our budget for the third time in a row. With a billion dollar surplus. And balanced budgets projected for the next 3 years.

This time, the country sat up and took notice.

It's always been that way. BC doesn't seek national attention, and historically...we rarely get it.

We've never been at the centre of this country. But we've always been there...on the far side of the Rockies...doing our part. Paying our fair share.

Working away, quietly. Rarely complaining.

The notable exception of course, is the 1990s...when the NDP was in government.

They had a different approach.

Tax more. Spend more. Borrow more.

That downward spiral that always repeats itself whenever they get into power.

Never spend your own money, if you can spend your children's.

Never pass the bill to your kids...if you can pass it on to your grandkids instead.

Encourage small business...by making big businesses smaller.

The NDP always tell us how much they care about working men and women.

They care so much...they see you struggling with that heavy wallet, and they want to make it lighter for you.

They know you can't be trusted with your own money. They can spend your paycheque way better than you can.

We – free enterprisers – don't take that view. We believe in empowering people.

In creating opportunity.

And I'd like to share how we've done that in British Columbia.

DIVERSE ECONOMY

British Columbians, over many generations, have built a diverse economy.

That's our great strength.

And in recent years, we've worked to diversify our export markets.

In 2001, when the BC Liberals came into government, 70% of our exports went to the United States. And just 2% to China.

Today, we've reduced our reliance on the U.S...to just half our exports.

Now we sell 20% of our exports to China, and 40% to the wider Pacific Rim.

More than any other province in Canada.

Our diverse economy is based on the 8 key sectors of the BC Jobs Plan we launched in 2011:

- Agrifoods
- Forestry
- International education
- Mining and energy
- Natural gas
- Technology and the green economy
- Tourism
- Transportation

Responsible energy development is at core of that plan.

Now some of our citizens...sometimes the loudest ones...believe we should never extract anything, anywhere, ever.

You've probably seen them on TV.

But the vast majority of our province believes in responsible resource development.
In responsible energy development.
In getting those energy resources to market and the opportunities that creates...as long as it's done right.

So the next generation will enjoy the same prosperity as we do...and the next one after that.

DOING IT RIGHT

That means protecting the environment.
And it means making sure communities benefit from resource development.
Because BC's natural resources belong to British Columbians.

Those were the principles behind our response to the Northern Gateway proposal...5 clear, consistent conditions for heavy oil pipelines.

When we announced them...we got some criticism. Some said we were standing in the way of economic development.

Others said we were selling out the province. Then we took our position to the people in the 2013 election...and won an increased majority.

Because unlike the NDP...we're not against pipelines. We're in favour of any project that provides economic benefits and protects our environment.

Those projects just need to be done right – because British Columbians...right across the political spectrum...expect nothing less.

And I want to thank Premier Prentice and his government for understanding and respecting that reality.

In BC, we practice what we preach.

You see that in our approach to the generational opportunity of LNG...liquefied natural gas...

Tapping our vast, 150-year supply of this cleaner fossil fuel, converting it to a liquid state, and shipping it to energy-hungry markets in Asia.

And I want to again thank Prime Minister Harper for delivering on our request to make BC even more competitive for LNG investment...by providing a big tax incentive to build those facilities.

On the provincial side, we've introduced a tax rate that will make us one of the most competitive jurisdictions to build an LNG plant.

And we've brought in legislation to make BC LNG plants the cleanest in the world.

Because the communities where those plants will be built deserve no less.

What's the result?

LNG proponents continuing to invest and move their proposals forward. 19 of them.

More than two dozen benefit agreements between First Nations and companies planning to build natural gas pipelines.

Communities excited about the prospects this new industry will bring.

That's the power of doing resource development right. That's why we've seen 5 new mines open and 7 expand since 2011, creating 1,300 new jobs.

That's why our mining industry accounts for 30,000 jobs today...more than double from 2001.

That's why our lumber exports to China have increased by 3,800% since 2001.

It comes from hard work. It comes from having a plan, and sticking to it.

And it comes from working together. Since I became Premier, we've signed over 250 treaty and non-treaty agreements with First Nations.

New partnerships that make sure First Nations, on and off reserves, have the opportunity to share in economic growth.

MARKET ACCESS AND FREE TRADE

A big part of BC's advantage is that we're Canada's Pacific Gateway.

That's a privilege, and it's a responsibility.

That's why we're working with the New West Partnership...Premiers Prentice, Brad Wall and myself...to

improve market access for businesses across the West and across Canada.

And we've called on our fellow premiers, as well as the federal government...to finally break down the remaining barriers and achieve a free trade zone right across Canada.

CONCLUSION

Thanks to the wisdom and common sense of Western Canadians...we have free enterprise governments across the region.

A strong partner in the North...our friend, Premier Pasloski.

I've said before...as have others...that Canada's economic heartbeat is moving West.
And it is.

Look at Alberta. For years now, they've been making an outsized contribution to this country's prosperity.

They've been there for all of us in times of need.

Canada needs a strong Alberta.
And a strong Saskatchewan. And a strong BC.
And yes, a strong Ontario and Quebec.

Because Canada's strength has never come from a big federal government telling the rest of us what to do, and how to do it.

They have their part to play...and it's important.
But our confederation is powered by the provinces.
Always has been, always will be.

And by the people who get up every morning, go to work, pay their taxes, and do their part to grow our economy and strengthen our society.

The people, by the way, who vote for the kind of leaders who are here today.

Canada needs the West. And the world needs what Canada has to offer.

If we do it right...and if we work together...our children and grandchildren will thank us for it.

Thank you.

ACKNOWLEDGE:

Warren Carr, Director of Sales for Okanagan, Telus (MC)
Mayors Doug Findlater and Colin Basran
Chief Robert Louie, Westbank First Nation

We live in a connected world.

Today, businesses, schools, and entrepreneurs have opportunities and access to information, resources, and customers like never before.

Those opportunities simply didn't exist as recently as ten years ago. And they're only possible with high-speed internet or cellular access.

British Columbians are some of the best connected people in the world. Over 93% of British Columbians have high-speed access.

In a province this large, that's a real accomplishment.

Our goal is to make sure the other 7% are playing on the same field.

Because British Columbians who don't have the same access are playing shorthanded.

That's why we made it our goal to provide that same access to every British Columbian by 2021.

To make it happen, we are working with other levels of government and private sector companies like TELUS.

We've made great strides so far. Working with Telus:

- we've completed more than 1,000 kilometers of cellular coverage on our highways;
- upgraded 264 schools with high-speed fibre optic cables;

- and upgraded the bandwidth for 41 small communities.

I want to thank Telus for doing their part to transform this province. And today, we're taking another step.

- END -

NO ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Good morning.

I'm honoured to be here with so many men and women of faith...

And to bring greetings on behalf of your provincial government.

Faith communities make British Columbia a better, stronger, richer place.

Faith strengthens the foundations of our institutions.

Faith gives rise to countless acts of kindness, large and small.

And our faith traditions give rise to the principles on which we seek to govern.

Where a diverse and growing economy...is matched by a compassionate and generous society.

Strong families, living in safe communities.

A British Columbia where there is a place, a purpose, and a future – for everyone.

Thank you for your support, and for your prayers.

And now a reading from the Book of Kings [1 Kings 3:5-15]:

5. At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you."

6 Solomon answered, "You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart.

You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day.

7 "Now, LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties.

8 Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number.

9 So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?"

10 The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this.

11 So God said to him, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice,

12 I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be.

13 Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both wealth and honour—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings.

14 And if you walk in obedience to me and keep my decrees and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life.”

15 Then Solomon awoke—and he realized it had been a dream.

He returned to Jerusalem, stood before the ark of the Lord’s covenant and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then he gave a feast for all his court.

- Leaving the place you were born and moving to a new country is one of the most difficult, courageous decisions a person can make.
- For over 40 years now, SUCCESS has been helping the people who make that choice...making our communities stronger, and bringing them closer together.
- Through settlement services for new members of the BC family...and a whole range of other support services...SUCCESS is part of the fabric of this community.
- I'm proud to support those efforts.
- And you should be proud that you're here tonight, giving your support.

Opening Remarks:

- I understand congratulations are in order, Lois – given that today you are embarking on a new journey as the CEO of a medical startup.
- This is an exciting day, the culmination of a year's work for the Council.
- Minister Bond and Minister Yamamoto have been keeping me apprised of your progress.
- I also want to thank you for your efforts in collaborating with the WEB Alliance to deliver the BC Economic Forum in October. While I was only able to be there for a short time, the buzz in the room was obvious.
- I know you have put a lot of effort into consolidating feedback from the Forum into some key actions for government to look at.

Closing Comments:

- When I established the Council, I was looking to you for advice on how best to grow BC's economy by empowering women. And you are delivering.
- There are a number of initiatives here that require substantive and focused follow up. I've asked my Ministers to ensure a deeper dive into these issues occurs in the coming weeks.
- Your recommendations will be the basis of our work with you in the coming weeks and months to support women in business, women as leaders and job creation.

Building Confidence through Education:

- I am pleased to see the focus on building business literacy by utilizing organizations already carrying out work such as Junior Achievement.
- I know Minister Yamamoto will be happy to see these recommendations given the importance of small business and entrepreneurship to the province.

Promoting Pathways to Non-Traditional Careers:

- We need to encourage British Columbians, and especially women, to enter the trades if we are going to meet our needs for skilled workers in the coming years.

Driving Senior Leadership:

- As you have acknowledged, the BC government has worked hard to achieve diversity in senior levels and through the Board Resource and Development Office. We take this seriously.
- It has taken a tremendous amount of work to get to this place, and I really appreciate your commitment.
- Minister Bond and Minister Yamamoto will be taking a lead in government on how the recommendations can impact what we do in government.
- I look forward to your continued advice moving forward, and in particular your continued efforts in refining the recommendations and how best to put them into action.

DC Climate
April 17, 2015
CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY
Thank you.

I'd like to tell you about some of the things we're working on in British Columbia.

Cradled between the Rockies and the Pacific Ocean, Washington State and Alaska, Canada's westernmost province is hard is a bold and beautiful place.

A place where successive generations have built our wealth on the natural resources from the land and sea, and from the resourcefulness of the people willing to do the hard work to deliver.

Just over 4 and a half million strong, British Columbia is tiny on the world stage when it comes to population and GHG emissions.

Canada produces just 2 per cent of global emissions. And BC produces just 8 per cent of Canada's total emissions.

We punch above our weight, not because of our good fortune to live in such a beautiful place...

But because we have worked hard, stayed disciplined, and made good policy.

As you know, in Canada, provinces have more responsibility than state governments do here.

In addition to health care, and education, provincial governments own and manage their energy and.....resources.

So while Ottawa will always play a major role...
in Canada, climate action must come from the provinces.

In 2008, BC took a bold first step. The provincial government introduced the first...
and still most comprehensive...
Carbon pricing initiative in North America.

It has worked – but it's crucial to understand why.

First, British Columbia has remained committed to controlling spending, and attracting investment. That's why we have balanced three consecutive budgets during a global economic slowdown.

Controlling spending has allowed us to maintain low corporate and income taxes.

When we introduced the carbon tax, we effectively shifted tax from what we do want – income and investment – to what we don't want... carbon pollution.

Since 2008, the carbon tax raised over \$6.1 billion – while allowing us to make \$7.1 billion in tax reductions for businesses, individuals, and families.

Putting a price on carbon – without punishing growth – was the foundation of a comprehensive suite of climate action.

The carbon tax also supports investment in clean technologies – B.C. has the highest clean tech jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada.

The price sends a clear signal to the market: find the lowest cost alternatives.

That way, the savings from things like increased energy efficiency and fuel switching becomes more attractive.

It's a nudge for companies and public sector organizations to account for the cost of carbon.

The results speak for themselves.

Since 2007, BC's real GDP has increased by 9.2%, stronger than the national average. And after our third consecutive balanced budget, we are projected to lead the country in growth.

This has been accomplished not only during a global recession, but with fuel use and emissions going down.

We heard the carbon tax would do nothing for the environment, and snuff out economic growth.

Instead, the opposite is true – emissions have gone down, while other provinces have come across hard times... British Columbia remains Canada's economic engine.

If introduced the right way – if you tax carbon pollution, and not punish economic growth – British Columbia has shown a carbon tax can be the foundation of effective government action.

It's an opportunity to leave the right legacy for the next generations.

Thank you.

ACKNOWLEDGE:

Hon. Andrew Wilkinson

Doug Findlater, District of West Kelowna Mayor

Jim Hamilton, Okanagan College president

Lance Priebe, CEO, Hyper Hippo

Thank you.

It's one thing to talk about our tech industry in the abstract.

It's another to see the cutting edge right in front of you...creating jobs and opportunity in the Okanagan.

Technology and innovation account for over 84,000 jobs in British Columbia today.

It's the third-largest economic contributor to our GDP.

We do a lot to support the industry by helping entrepreneurs break through and turn their ideas into businesses.

But just as important is looking at what barriers exist to growing those businesses...
and doing what we can to tear them down.

One of the biggest hurdles is finding qualified people.

The opportunities are there. We just need to connect young people with the training to take them.

So today, I'm proud to announce \$250,000 to pilot coding programs at 5 public post-secondary institutions:

- Okanagan College
- BCIT
- SFU
- UBC
- UVic.

This pilot program means more students learning the skills to create computer software, apps, and websites.
It means more points of entry into a growth industry.

It means a larger pool of talent – not just for companies already here, but those thinking about setting up shop.

Each graduate will be ready to compete and win in British Columbia's strong, diverse, and increasingly knowledge-based economy.

We're asking these institutions to work with the BC Innovation Council and its Acceleration Network...
And align their programs with the needs of companies in their region.

So that graduates have the opportunity to pursue careers in tech close to home.

Like these students, BC's tech industry has a strong, bright future – right across our province.

I can't think of a better investment.

I've had a good meeting with Mayor Hepner, Chief Superintendent Bill Fordy, Ministers Anton and Virk, and Superintendent Jordan Tinney.

About the issues around gang violence confronting Surrey.

I want to be clear...

Violence hurts the victims of specific crimes, It hurts their families...and it also damages the whole community...

The actions of a few can take away people's sense of security...

People can feel all alone -- that they are facing this threat on their own.

I'm here to tell you the people of Surrey are not alone.

The Government of British Columbia stands with you...

The hardworking, law-abiding people of this great city.

We're ready to work with you – and we won't stop working until we stop gang violence.

It won't happen overnight.

And it can only be achieved if all of us work together...
Families, governments, and various agencies.

We have a comprehensive approach:

- Tough on crime.
- And vigilant on the root causes of gang violence.

Last week we approved Surrey's request for 100 more police officers and forwarded it to the federal government for their final approval.

That's on top of the 30 officers that we and the federal government already approved last September.

Every year, the province provides \$60 million to the RCMP alone in B.C. for the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit and anti-gang initiatives.

Every year, the province provides hundreds of thousands in funding for anti-violence programs and community organizations in Surrey.

In just the last year, we've returned more than \$318,000 to Surrey organizations from proceeds of crime.

And we continue to work with schools to help keep kids safe – and out of reach for the gangs that depend on a steady stream of new recruits.

One program that has attracted national attention is the WRAP program.

It identifies 11-to-17 year olds at risk of joining a gang, or already displaying gang-associated behaviour.

Since it was initiated with Federal Government funding in 2009, there have been over 500 referrals. An independent evaluation found that participants saw negative police contacts decrease by two-thirds.

It's made such a difference there is a waitlist. Kids whose teachers or families are worried about them.

That's why today, I'm announcing provincial funding to expand the WRAP program to help more at-risk youth.

Right now, there are 60 teenagers involved. With today's announcement, we will expand the program by up to 20 spots, cutting the waitlist by half.

And working with our Federal partners, we can eliminate the waitlist completely.

Working together as partners at the province, the city of Surrey, and the federal government, we've made a lot of progress.

Crime, including violent crime, has been on the decline in Surrey over the last ten years.

But we can and must do more.

In the coming weeks, we will be engaging our federal partners to work with us at the province and the city...
To ensure we have a coordinated approach...
and that we're supporting the people of Surrey in the most effective way – and make Surrey's safety second to none.

Let me close by saying this.
It's not just about Surrey. It's about every BC community.

We will not turn away from violence.

Surrey Event

Tuesday, April 28

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

We will continue to do our part for safe communities and to end violence.

And we will continue to stand with you, and work with you Until the job is done.

Thank you.

Thank you.

In BC, we are blessed.

Blessed with a beautiful province...

A strong, diverse, and growing economy...

And a bright future, with more and more economic opportunity.

The people who are going to build that future are right here.

Students, like the ones here from Lambrick Park and Clermont Secondary.

But also people entering the workforce for the first time.

People retraining or upgrading their skills across the province.

People from communities right across our province.

People like Josh Jardine, who's here today from North Vancouver.

Josh is pursuing a very promising career in pipefitting, thanks to a training program made possible under the Skills for Jobs Blueprint.

Today, we're not celebrating the anniversary of the Blueprint. We're celebrating the achievements of people like Josh...

And the bright future for students like the ones here today...

Enabled by the changes we have made through the Skills for Jobs Blueprint.

Because as BC's economy continues to grow in size and diversity...

We need to connect young people with the skills to succeed in growth industries.

Connect them with the opportunity to build careers, lives, and families of their own close to home.

Because who would ever want to leave BC?

And in just one year...

We have accomplished a lot.

- We're investing \$185 million over three years in infrastructure and equipment for skills and trades training – including new facilities for:
Camosun College,
Okanagan College,
and Nicola Valley Institute of Technology.

- Nearly 50,000 British Columbians in 31 communities are participating in Find Your Fit, connecting people to in-demand careers.
- We're also helping British Columbians who can't afford training with the BC Access Grant and Loan Forgiveness Program.
- To help schools and districts improve or set up career and skills training programs, we launched a Career and Skills Toolkit.
- Just this week, we announced \$6.1 million for 1,429 additional critical-trades seats in 14 public post-secondary institutions.
- Yesterday, I was in Kelowna, announcing pilot funding for coding programs at five post-secondary

institutions.

- And today in Prince Rupert, Minister John Rustad is announcing the first project in a \$30 million program to support skills training for First Nations impacted by LNG development.

TRADES SEATS ANNOUNCEMENT

Today, we're taking another step forward. I'm pleased to announce more than \$727,000 to create 326 seats in Trades Discovery programs at 12 post-secondary institutions.

Their programs are aligned with in-demand trades, such as electricians, heavy equipment operators, heavy-duty mechanics and pipefitters.

Three schools here on the island will receive \$216,000 for 96 seats:

- Camosun College will receive \$153,000 for 68 seats.
- Vancouver Island University will receive \$36,000 for 16 seats.
- North Island College will receive \$27,000 for 12 seats.

In just one year – we have come a long way. Impacted a lot of lives.

It's those people as they acquire skills, take advantage of the opportunities presented by our growing economy...

Who will build this province.

They'll do that the same way we all want to – with a career they want, generating wealth in their community, finding a home, and maybe a family.

That's how you build the future – by connecting more and more people like Josh with opportunity.

That's what we create by ensuring everyone has a chance to find their fit. Thank you.