

Thank you.

I want to thank Jack Davidson and Todd Stone....
Two greats from two generations, working towards the
same goal.
Like Tony Bennett singing a duet with Justin Bieber.

It shouldn't work. But it does.

Today, I want to talk about you.

About the role you play in Canada's leading economy –
something we haven't been able to say for generations.

I work every day to make sure we have every opportunity
to go on saying that.

I also want to talk about the role you can play in
determining whether we stay on course.

BUILDING B.C.

Because it's a crucial moment for this province.
And we need you.

We need people who understand the value of hard work –
the values that built this province.
The values that will continue to build this province.

Many of you worked on the four-laneing of the Trans-
Canada to the Alberta border.

We've made a lot of progress since we committed to
accelerating this important work: Hoffman's Bluff, a key
project, was just finished this week.

But you may have heard the NDP saying they'd do it
faster.

They're like that guy who shows up late to help you move, sits on your couch, drinks your beer, doesn't lift a finger – but says, “hey, buddy – you're welcome. Happy to help.”

I guess they're in a hurry. Every NDP'er in the country is applying for the same handful government jobs in Edmonton.

But relax, guys. You'll get there.

The funny thing is the NDP opposed that project. And it's not like that was an isolated incident.

- Evergreen Line – completed on time and under budget. The first trains run this week. 8,000 construction jobs.
- The South Fraser Perimeter Road. 4,000 construction jobs, another 7,000 long-term jobs in Delta and Surrey.
- Port Mann Bridge – 8,000 jobs.
- Canada Line – 7,000 jobs.
- Site C – 10,000 jobs.
- Pacific NorthWest LNG – 4,500 construction jobs.

The NDP opposed every single one.

Here's what else they tried to stop:

- 4 consecutive balanced budgets, with a fifth on the way.
- Leading the country in growth – three times faster than the rest of Canada.
- Being on track to eliminate our operating debt in 4 years – the first time since 1975.
- The lowest middle class taxes in Canada.
- The lowest unemployment rate in the country – the best comparison since 1961.
- And the best job creation record in Canada, with 183,000 jobs since we launched the BC Jobs Plan.

And because we've done that, we have the ability to make record investments in health, education, and programs that lift people up, like the Single Parent Employment Initiative.

We also have the ability to make record investments in infrastructure – over \$75 billion in capital projects.

And it's not way off in the future. In the next three years alone, we're investing \$2.8 billion as part of *BC on the Move*.

Let me touch on a few of those projects.

You all know the main event – The George Massey Tunnel Replacement. It's on schedule to start construction next year, with the bridge opening in 2022.

For commuters, it means getting home faster, and with much less frustration.

It also means getting goods from across Canada to market more quickly and more efficiently.

And for you, it means about 9,000 jobs.

There's also the \$59 million overpass in Langley on Highway 1 and 216th Street. It's going to reduce congestion in one of the Lower Mainland's fastest-growing areas.

And it's going to create 360 jobs.

And maybe if you happened to drive here today from the west shore or up island, you went through Vancouver Island's biggest bottleneck.

It's getting fixed with the \$85 million McKenzie Interchange. It means 515 jobs here on the Island.

But it's not just the big ticket items. There are 45 resurfacing projects going to tender, including 20 bridge projects and 10 safety projects.

And in the coming weeks, we'll be announcing details on a multi-million dollar investment for major improvements and upgrades to a vital highway in the Interior.

Altogether, those investments also created 15,000 jobs. And that's just direct jobs. But there are tens of thousands of jobs in firms that rely on you. Some of you are here tonight. You may be in supplies, engineering firms, HR, or law firms.

We made these investments to make travel safer and faster for British Columbians, and because it's good the lifeblood of our province – trade.

Projects like the Port Mann, South Fraser, Deltaport improvement, and rail corridors in Prince Rupert and

Roberts Bank are crucial for our role as Canada's Pacific Gateway.

In just the last five years...

We've seen an increase of our commodity exports by 42 per cent – up to a total of \$35.8 billion.

We only depend on the United States for just over half of our exports. And they're turning inwards.

Donald Trump has already backed out of the TPP, and has said things about free trade that should worry us.

B.C. is more insulated than any other province. 36 per cent of our exports go to Asia – and that number is going up.

And as the rest of the country also turns towards the growing, trading nations across the Pacific...
The Pacific Gateway will be a national lifeline.

CONCLUSION

Next year is a big year. I can tell you my job depends on it. But I'm not alone.

You don't have to look very far to see what happens under a government that doesn't believe in trade or free enterprise.

If the '90s were too long ago for you, just ask all your friends from Alberta...
You know, the ones calling you about trying to find work.

There's no such thing as an easy election in B.C. Every single one is tough, and every single one is decided by a few thousand votes in a few key ridings.

That's a good thing. Because it means every vote counts.

It means groups like the Road Builders have enormous power to influence people.

I'm working every day to put British Columbians First.

We have a plan worth fighting for.

We have ideas and a vision worth fighting for – and we know that, because they're the same values that built this province, and made BC a leader in Canada.

I hope you'll fight for them too.

We are going to fight for the ideas and the values that have made this province what it is today...

And what it will become for our kids – and theirs.

AWARD

I want to invite Jack back up here.

We're all here because of Jack. And thousands of British Columbians are working because of the work Jack and the Road Builders do, every single day.

As President and CEO since 1999, he's been a driving force bringing industry together.

So it is my pleasure to have been invited to present you with the Deputy Minister's Award of Excellence.

We're sad to see you go...we thank you for leaving this province in a better place.

MARILYN

Behind strong men, there's often an even stronger woman.

Marilyn has been a rock for Jack, always standing with him and supporting him in all the important work he does for this industry.

From all of us, we thank you.

(Present flowers)

Acknowledge:

MP Dan Ruimy (Pitt Meadows-Maple Ridge)

Linda Reimer (introduction)

Mayors Richard Stewart, Mike Clay

TransLink CEO Kevin Desmond

MLA Richard Lee

BC is leading the way.

Our economy is growing at double the national average.

BC's unemployment rate is the lowest in the country.

Sometimes, it takes a while for the rest of the country to take notice of what happens here.

But the secret is out.

Last year, almost 17,000 made the trek west from elsewhere in Canada. Another 13,000 followed them this year – and that's just over the first six months.

Over the next five years, another 250,000 more people from across Canada and the world will come here. Coquitlam is going to grow by almost 10 per cent.

As BC grows, the services British Columbians depend on have to keep pace.

Starting today, the new Evergreen Line will get commuters from Coquitlam City Centre to Lougheed Town Centre in about 15 minutes.

This 11-kilometre extension makes our elevated rapid transit system the longest in the world.

By 2021, 70,000 people are expected to take advantage of it every day.

They're going to get home faster, with their travel time cut almost in half during rush hour.

And they're going to get home cleaner and greener.

This extension alone will reduce emissions by over 18,000 tonnes by 2021.

This investment also allows for greater density, with services and businesses within easy reach.

As the Lower Mainland continues to grow – and the housing market stays hot – supply has to keep up with demand.

Denser communities aren't just more affordable – they're interconnected, sustainable – and the future.

Today, we're one step closer.

This couldn't have happened without a partner in Ottawa – please help me welcome MP Dan Ruimy.

ACKNOWLEDGE:

Terry Lake

Norm Letnick

Steve Thomson

In June, we committed to creating a provincial network of integrated care facilities that offer care for mental health, substance use, and social services.

Today, we're opening our first, here in Kelowna.

It's a unique model.

With 25 different programs and organizations under one roof, it's a one-stop shop for youth who may need one or several services.

It allows for earlier therapeutic interventions, when mental health problems are just emerging, and key to preventing problems from becoming more serious.

Asking for help is one of the hardest things in life to do. And once someone has taken that first step – Foundry will make the next few steps as easy as possible.

Young people can be referred by a doctor, their school, a family member – or if they prefer, walk in themselves.

You might ask – why Foundry?

It was chosen by the community. And it's the perfect articulation of what this facility aspires to be.

This foundry will be a place where people can find or build their own inner strength. It's a place to build a solid foundation for a successful, healthy life.

It's a place to find yourself.

I want to thank our partners, including the Graham Boeckh Foundation, St. Paul's Foundation, the Michael Smith

Foundation for Health Research, and InnerChange
Foundation, who will administer Foundry.

Starting this Spring, Foundry will be completely up and
running – helping young people find their path to wellness.

Thank you. We have a long and productive history with our local chambers across the province.

Your ideas help build this province...our accomplishments are really yours, so thank you for everything you do.

Today, I want to talk about the role you play in Canada's leading economy – something we haven't been able to say for generations.

I work every day to make sure we have every opportunity to go on saying that we're leading the country.

I also want to talk about making sure we stay on course. Because we have a crucial moment here next year.

You all know the record:

- 4 consecutive balanced budgets, with a fifth on the way.

- Leading the country in growth – three times faster than the rest of Canada.
- Being on track to eliminate our operating debt in 4 years – the first time since 1975.
- The lowest middle class taxes in Canada.
- The lowest unemployment rate in the country – the best comparison since 1961.
- The best job creation record in Canada, with 183,000 jobs since we launched the BC Jobs Plan.
- And record investments in health, infrastructure, education, and programs that lift people up, like the Single Parent Employment Initiative.

We've done this while having the continent's first and most broadly applied carbon tax.

We've been leading from the front on carbon pricing for a long time.

Last week, we reached an agreement to get the rest of the country to catch up.

Yes, it means an increase to \$50 per tonne in 2022. But I can promise you two things:

First, British Columbians won't pay more than anyone else – and it won't be Ottawa telling us what's fair. If we don't agree it's a level playing field, the deal is off.

And second, we're staying revenue neutral. Every dollar we raise in carbon pricing will be returned to British Columbians in corresponding tax cuts.

That's the central principle behind our carbon tax. It's the reason it works, and it's the reason the United Nations held us up as an example to follow.

It's a lot to be proud of. And it's very, very fragile.

LESSONS FROM DOWN SOUTH

It can all fall apart in the time it takes to cast a ballot...
Or decide not to cast a ballot.

There's been a lot of hand-wringing about the US election, and what it means for the United States, Canada, and the world.

From my point of view as Premier of a province that still depends on the United States for the majority of our trade...

Whatever else Donald Trump has said or done...he's said things about free trade that should worry us.

But the fact is...

Trump hasn't said anything about NAFTA, the TPP, or globalization that we don't hear from the LEAP Manifesto crowd every single day.

The NDP said all the same things as Trump about the TPP.

And they'd never admit it, but a few champagne corks were popped at NDP HQ when Trump killed it.

You just wish they were honest enough to admit it. Under President Trump as under President Obama – we believe both sides of the border are best served by fair managed trade.

We've managed to get softwood to the top of the federal government's agenda. To their credit, the Prime Minister and Minister McKenna have listened and kept working.

And should their good-faith negotiations fail, we are ready and prepared to vigorously defend B.C.'s interests.

And if it's a long fight – we've gone through worse. When we took office in 2001, 70% of our exports were dependent on the US.

For the past 15 years, we have been working hard to diversify our export markets.

As a result, we weathered the 2008 economic downturn better than most – even when BC exports to the US dropped by 25% in a single year.

That meant a loss of \$4.6 Billion in 1 year – or, if you're Mike de Jong, nearly 12% of all BC government spending that year.

After five years of hard work and hard decisions, we have recovered – and built Canada's leading economy.

My job is to create an environment where you can continue to thrive.

So we're going to continue working to grow our markets in Asia, with continuing efforts in China, India, Japan and South Korea...

And new trade offices in emerging markets like the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

And we're going to keep investing and creating the conditions for success in booming industries like tourism, tech and clean tech, and industries that are about to rebound, like mining.

CONCLUSION

But before I take your questions, I want to close with a final thought on the US election.

There is no one single reason Trump won and Hillary lost. Anyone who tells you different is either trying to sell you something, or making a fool of themselves on Twitter.

But there is one lesson for us – complacency.

In the weeks and days before the election, pundits told worried Americans it was already over.

No less an authority than Princeton University said Hillary had a 99 per cent chance of winning.
And they weren't alone.

What does that tell a voter who might be on the fence?
A voter who knows one candidate is bad news, but isn't quite sold on the other?
It says "no problem."
It's okay to sit this one out.

We cannot let that happen here.

There's no such thing as an easy election in B.C.

Every single one is tough, and every single one is decided by a few thousand votes in a few key ridings.

That's a good thing. Because it means every vote counts.

Just think how different things seemed in December 2012 and how they seemed on election night.

Thank you – and I'm looking forward to taking your questions.

ACKNOWLEDGE:

Rich Coleman (introduction)

Amrik Virk

Marvin Hunt

British Columbians work hard to save up for their first home.

Scraping together that first down payment can be the hardest part.

Everybody understands that it's not easy, especially without help from their families or friends.

But I believe, home ownership should be within reach for hardworking British Columbians.

So today I'm announcing a partnership.

To help British Columbians buy that first home. Build their savings. Build their future in our province.

The program is called The B.C. HOME Partnership.

It stands for the Home Owner Mortgage and Equity Partnership.

The provincial government will match the amount first-time buyers have saved for a down payment...

Up to \$37,500 for a maximum purchase price of \$750,000.

It will reduce your first mortgage, lowering monthly costs, and keeping more of your hard-earned money where it belongs: in your wallet.

It's an interest free, 25-year loan, with no payments or interest due for the first five years.

We've limited the program to first-time homebuyers who earn less than a combined \$150,000...

Have been a Canadian citizen or permanent resident for at least five years...

And have lived in BC for at least one year.

The HOME Partnership is a three-year program – and in that time, we anticipate it will help some 42,000 B.C. families own their first home.

Applications will open on January 16th.

Earlier this year, I laid out 6 Principles on housing affordability:

- Increasing the housing supply
- smart transit expansion,
- supporting first-time home buyers,
- consumer protection,
- increasing rental supply,
- and making sure the dream of home ownership is within reach for the middle class.

The HOME Partnership is the latest action we've taken in support of those principles, including:

- \$855 million for 5,000 affordable housing units across the province;
- A new tax on foreign residential buyers to correct a distorted market;
- Exempting new housing up to \$750,000 from the Property Transfer Tax;
- A luxury tax on home sales over \$2 million;
- And protecting homebuyers by ending self-regulation of the real estate industry.

Because we have stuck to our plan to control government spending and grow a strong, diverse economy, we're able to make significant investments and put British Columbians First.

HOME Partnership

December 15, 2016

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Hardworking British Columbians have built Canada's leading economy – and with programs like this, they're sharing in the benefits.