

From: [Minister, TAC TAC:EX](#)
To: [Newhook, Kelly TAC:EX](#)
Subject: FW: World Accordion and Tango Festival information from MLA Weaver
Date: October 31, 2018 2:39:25 PM

From: Weaver.MLA, Andrew <Andrew.Weaver.MLA@leg.bc.ca>
Sent: October 31, 2018 2:26 PM
To: Minister, TAC TAC:EX <TAC.Minister@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: World Accordion and Tango Festival information from MLA Weaver

Dear Noreen,

Thank you for speaking me on the phone just now.

MLA Weaver has been contacted by Mr. Aleksandar Milojevic regarding an upcoming festival and MLA Weaver asked me to convey to Minister Beare the urgency with respect to Mr. Milojevic's request. Please see below information provided in his email to us:

"Our big World Accordion and Tango Festival is facing one very serious obstacle right now. We haven't received the amount that we expected from the TAC Ministry and I was never given a chance to present our big festival to Minister Lisa Beare. In the meantime, all other grants that we received or still expecting results from, are not covering the money prizes for the World Accordion Championships part of our festival.

*We've had an individual donor who was willing to sponsor this part of our festival, but for personal reasons that person bailed on us last week. **Right now, that leaves us short of \$35,000, that we have to provide for the money prizes for this prestigious international accordion competition. We need that money in our account by Nov 15.***

We have done everything we could do, there will be hundreds of people coming from out-of-town and out-of-country to see and participate in our festival, our local audience will enjoy some fantastic events, the local economy will receive an extra off-season boost, and this will be a great promotion for both Victoria and Oak Bay, and for our Province."

Would you be able to follow up with Mr. Milojevic? His contact information is:

Aleksandar Milojevic

s.22

Thank you and best wishes,

Judy

Judy Fainstein | **Director of Operations**
Office of Andrew Weaver, MLA
219-3930 Shelbourne St, Victoria, BC V8P 5P6
Phone: (250) 472-8528 | Fax: (250) 472-6163

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This message contains confidential and/or privileged information. If you are not the addressee or authorized to receive this for the addressee, you must not use, copy, forward, disclose or take any action based on this message or any information herein. If you receive this message in error, please advise the sender immediately by reply e-mail and delete this message.

Chauvin, Lindsay JTT:EX

From: Minister, TAC TAC:EX
Sent: Thursday, August 23, 2018 4:19 PM
To: 'corinne@riotheatre.ca'
Cc: 'gregor.robertson@vancouver.ca'; Weaver.MLA, Andrew LASS:EX; Olsen.MLA, Adam LASS:EX
Subject: Letter from Honourable Lisa Beare and Honourable Carole James
Attachments: 34091 Signed.pdf; 34091 Incoming Save The Rio Theatre - Property Transfer Tax; 34091 Incoming 2 revision Revised Copy - Rio Theatre - Property Transfer Tax; 34091 Incoming 3 Save The Rio Theatre - Letter to Ministry of Arts and Culture

Please find attached a letter from the Honourable Lisa Beare, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture and the Honourable Carole James, Minister of Finance and Deputy Premier.

Thank you,

Office of the Minister
Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture



Ref: 34091

August 23, 2018

Ms. Corinne Lea
Email: corinne@riotheatre.ca

Dear Ms. Lea:

Thank you for your letter of July 25, 2018, regarding the Rio Theatre. We were very happy to learn at the end of July that the future of the Rio Theatre had been secured. As a long-standing cultural institution in Vancouver, the Rio plays a vital role in the unique and diverse spirit of the city. The response to the campaign to Save the Rio was remarkable, with support from Vancouverites near and far, and it was inspiring to see the community rally around the theatre.

While the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (Ministry) does not provide funding for private, for-profit businesses or newly formed organizations, thereby precluding us from contributing, the provincial government recognizes the capital pressures facing the arts and culture sector and has committed to addressing this need. The Ministry will be working on developing an arts infrastructure fund to support artists, and we are also working with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to develop the Community, Culture and Recreation stream of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program that leverages federal dollars. These programs will be open to cultural non-profit organizations, and we are looking forward to providing that much-needed support to the sector.

As you may know, the Ministry of Finance has defined exemptions for the property transfer tax. In order to receive an exemption from the tax, a property must meet the criteria for one of these defined exemptions. For instance, registered charities are exempt from property transfer tax when they purchase or receive property that will be used for a charitable purpose. For more information on this exemption, please see Ministry of Finance [Bulletin PTT 025](#).

.../2

Ms. Corinne Lea
Page 2

Arts and culture comprise the cornerstone of our communities, and our government is committed to supporting this important work. Congratulations again on your successful campaign to protect the legacy of the Rio Theatre.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,



Lisa Beare
Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture



Carole James
Minister of Finance

pc: His Worship Mayor Gregor Robertson
City of Vancouver

Dr. Andrew Weaver, MLA
Oak Bay-Gordon Head

Mr. Adam Olsen, MLA
Saanich North and the Island

Chauvin, Lindsay JTT:EX

From: Corinne Lea <corinne@riotheatre.ca>
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2018 9:40 PM
To: Minister, TAC TAC:EX
Subject: 34091 Incoming Save The Rio Theatre - Property Transfer Tax

Hello Ministry of Arts and Culture,

My name is Corinne Lea, and I am the operator of the Rio Theatre. I'm currently in the midst of a very public campaign to purchase the Rio property, one of Vancouver's last iconic indie theatres. We're trying to save it from developers who want to tear it down and build condos.

Our campaign has been extremely successful, we have raised over \$500,000 in donated funds from the community for our non profit, The Vancouver Art House Society, and the rest of the funds have come from independent private investors who all want to help save the theatre. Plus Vancity has approved a \$4 million mortgage.

Its been 6 months of hard work and we have almost everything we need to buy the property for the \$7.5 million purchase price that was offered by developers, and we had to match it in order to get our offer accepted.

During our campaign our Vancouver Mayor showed his support and Proclaimed #SaveTheRio week, plus they City and the Federal government are also looking into how they can help by way of grants to our non profit Society.

We are wondering if the Province might be able to help us with the Property Transfer tax because after we pay the \$7.5 million to buy the property, we still need to raise an extra \$207,000 to pay the PPT.

This \$207,000 Property Transfer Tax, is one of our last hurdles to buy the property. This has been such a huge team effort to save the theatre, which is beloved by the community, it would be amazing if there is a way the Province could help us! We have over 25,000 supporters for our campaign who would all be very grateful for your support.

Let me know if you have any questions or you need any more information.

I appreciate your consideration,

Thank you,

Corinne Lea

604-723-2822

Chauvin, Lindsay JTT:EX

From: Corinne Lea <corinne@riotheatre.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2018 11:16 AM
To: Minister, TAC TAC:EX
Subject: 34091 Incoming 2 revision Revised Copy - Rio Theatre - Property Transfer Tax

Hello Ministry of Arts and Culture,

My name is Corinne Lea, and I am the operator of the Rio Theatre. As you may be aware, I'm currently in the midst of a highly public campaign to purchase the Rio property, one of Vancouver's last iconic independent theatres with many thousands of supporters and customers. We're trying to save it from developers who want to tear it down and build condos.

Our campaign has been extremely successful, we have raised over \$500,000 in donated funds from the community for our non profit, Vancouver Art House Society, and the rest of the funds have come from private investors, big and small, who all want to help save the theatre. I am personally making a significant investment. Additionally, Vancity has approved a \$4 million mortgage.

It has been 6 months of hard work and we have almost everything we need to buy the property for the matching \$7.5 million purchase price that was offered by the developers.

During our campaign, Vancouver's Mayor showed his support and proclaimed #SaveTheRio week, plus we are in advanced discussions with the City and the Federal government for funding support.

As successful as we have been, we have little margin for error and the Property Transfer Tax, especially after the recent increase, has proved an additional stumbling block that we need to overcome. We would need to raise an additional \$207,000 just to pay that tax.

I'm quite sure that the original intent of the property tax hike was not to obstruct the saving of an East Vancouver cultural institution from developers!

I would like to formally ask your assistance with the Province to waive this tax. We have not otherwise appealed to the Province for any support, and believe that such a waiver is a suitable proxy for more direct forms of funding being proposed by the City and the Federal government.

This has been such a huge team effort to save the theatre, which is beloved by the community, and it would be amazing if there is a way the Province could help us! We have over 25,000 supporters for our campaign, and they would all be very grateful for your support.

Please let me know if you are available to discuss in more depth or if you need any more information to inform your decision on this matter. I am confident that we can demonstrate to you our high cultural and community value to BC.

I appreciate your consideration,

Thank you,
Corinne Lea
604-723-2822

Chauvin, Lindsay JTT:EX

From: Corinne Lea <corinne@riotheatre.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, July 25, 2018 9:20 PM
To: Minister, TAC TAC:EX
Subject: 34091 Incoming 3 Save The Rio Theatre - Letter to Ministry of Arts and Culture

Hello Lisa Beare and the Ministry of Arts and Culture,

My name is Corinne Lea, and I am the operator of the Rio Theatre. As you may be aware, I'm currently in the midst of a highly public campaign to purchase the Rio property, one of Vancouver's last iconic independent theatres with many thousands of supporters and customers. We're trying to save it from developers who want to tear it down and build condos.

Our campaign has been extremely successful, we have raised over \$500,000 in donated funds from the community for our non profit, Vancouver Art House Society, and the rest of the funds have come from private investors, big and small, who all want to help save the theatre. I am personally making a significant investment. Additionally, Vancity has approved a \$4 million mortgage.

It has been 6 months of hard work and we have almost everything we need to buy the property for the matching \$7.5 million purchase price that was offered by the developers.

During our campaign, Vancouver's Mayor showed his support and proclaimed #SaveTheRio week, plus we are in advanced discussions with the City and the Federal government for funding support. Just today the City approved a grant of \$375,000 for our non profit Society and I'm told the Federal grant will be a longer process.

As successful as we have been, we have little margin for error and the Property Transfer Tax, especially after the recent increase, has proved an additional stumbling block that we need to overcome. We would need to raise an additional \$207,000 just to pay that tax.

I'm quite sure that the original intent of the property tax hike was not to obstruct the saving of an East Vancouver cultural institution from developers!

I would like to formally ask your assistance with the Province to waive this tax. We have not otherwise appealed to the Province for any support, and believe that such a waiver is a suitable proxy for more direct forms of funding being proposed by the City and the Federal government.

This has been such a huge team effort to save the theatre, which is beloved by the community, and it would be amazing if there is a way the Province could help us! We have over 25,000 supporters for our campaign, and they would all be very grateful for your support.

Please let me know if you are available to discuss in more depth or if you need any more information to inform your decision on this matter. I am confident that we can demonstrate to you our high cultural and community value to BC. Or if you have any other ideas of how the Province could help assist us with funding to save the Rio we would be very grateful.

I appreciate your consideration,

Thank you,

Corinne Lea

604-723-2822



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

July 31, 2018

Dear Minister Beare,

We are writing to express our support for the Rio Theatre's request for a property transfer tax (PTT) exemption.

As you know, the Rio Theatre is a valued cultural hub in Vancouver. Arts and culture spaces are essential to the vibrancy and vitality of our communities and they have been increasingly under threat due to the affordability crisis. The Rio is a unique, iconic Vancouver landmark that also employs many members of the arts community.

The City of Vancouver announced today that it is providing a grant of \$375,000. We believe that given the cultural contribution of the Rio to British Columbia, a PTT exemption is an appropriate way for the provincial government to do its part to protect and support this vital cultural space.

The campaign to save the Rio has been a genuine grassroots community effort, with members of the community investing in the theatre for as little as \$1,000. Due to this private investment, the Rio sale is not qualified for the PTT exemption that is normally awarded to registered charities. However, the Hollywood Arts Foundation is a registered charity and is a part owner of the property on which the theatre resides. Additionally, the grant money from the City of Vancouver the funding provided by the City is conditional upon the theatre remaining an arts and culture space for 10 years. The province could get the same assurance that the PTT exemption.

We hope you will seriously consider the Rio's proposal. We would welcome any further opportunity to discuss how we can work together to support the arts in B.C.

Sincerely,

Andrew Weaver, Leader, B.C. Green Party

Adam Olsen, spokesperson for tourism, arts and culture, B.C. Green Party

CC. Carole James, Minister of Finance

Legislative Office

Room 028 Parliament Buildings

Victoria BC V8V 1X4

T 250-387-8347

Andrew.Weaver.mla@leg.bc.ca