



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

May 21, 2020

The Honourable Lisa Beare
Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture
Room 151 Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

RE: *Tourism industry recovery plan technical briefing*

Dear Minister Beare,

We have been blessed with a provincial tourism sector that provides billions of dollars in revenue and hundreds of thousands of jobs to B.C. families. It is the lifeblood of many local economies as well, from beachgoers in Parksville to outdoor recreation enthusiasts in Revelstoke and everywhere in between. But as you are well aware, British Columbia's once-thriving tourism industry has been brought to its knees due to COVID-19. Now, the difficult, confusing and overwhelming task of reopening is facing hundreds of small business owners that would normally be moving swiftly into the summer season.

Though there have been some guidelines released for certain industries and a general best practices list for reopening, there are many questions still left unanswered. Leading up to and following this past long weekend we have received dozens of pieces of correspondence requesting clarity and a better-formulated plan by government to aid the tourism sector. This ranges from adventure tourism's operators who run animal viewing tours, companies that rent summer sports equipment, wilderness guides and countless other members of B.C.'s uniquely diverse tourism sector.

They are all asking for the same thing: what is government's plan for the industry and where is the sector-specific outline for its recovery? We do not have those answers to share with worried British Columbians, so we are again asking you to help us provide the best information and solutions.

We would like to you to provide us, and other concerned members of the tourism sector, a comprehensive technical briefing on the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture's plan for reopening and recovery. For instance, where are the supports for those businesses that have fallen through the cracks of government support, what are the models for recovery and what parts of the tourism industry can we expect to recover first?



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We have yet to hear from you on several issues that we have brought up at the behest of people negatively affected by COVID-19's impact on the tourism sector. Early into your government's response to this pandemic, we requested a tourism and hospitality representative be included in the Premier's Economic Recovery Task Force. Similarly, we wrote to you in April asking for a long-term, detailed plan for the industry's recovery so that hard-hit businesses can start preparing for the future. We also raised concerns put forth by communities that receive funding through the Resort Municipality Initiative.

As it stands, we have yet to receive a response to our requests, which has us concerned for the industry's recovery. This is not simply a request for our knowledge; this is so we can do our best to respond to the hundreds of British Columbians looking to us for answers that only your ministry can provide.

We look forward to hearing an update on these outstanding inquiries and to schedule an opportunity to be briefed on your ministry's path moving forward.

Sincerely,

Doug Clovechok

MLA for Columbia River-Revelstoke
Opposition Co-Critic Tourism, Arts and Culture

Michelle Stilwell

MLA for Parksville-Qualicum
Opposition Co-Critic Tourism, Arts and Culture
2000, 2008, 2012, 2016 Paralympic Champion