



For Immediate Release

Let's build prosperity for our communities

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By sea, land, and air, we prosper. This is the motto on the Vancouver Coat of Arms, which depicts a logger and a fisherman. A lot has changed in 45 years since leaders appreciated British Columbia's resource economy enough to pay homage to two of our province's founding industries.

Even though companies involved in sectors such as mining, forestry, energy and fisheries support countless workers in Metro Vancouver and communities around the province, the disturbing truth is that resource-based projects face unprecedented and often unreasonable challenges from a vocal minority.

Overall, our resource industries have made great progress in protecting the environment while providing jobs that support families and paying taxes that support hospitals and schools. Many companies go beyond regulation to take a balanced approach to meeting the environmental and social needs of the community.

The process to get a project approved has also progressed and evolved. For example, government-led reviews today are thorough, lengthy and detailed. The potential risks and benefits are weighed, including the ability of a project to grow our economy and create prosperity.

A significantly large investment of time and money is necessary, and at the end of the day there's no guarantee that a project will meet the government's requirements. Nonetheless, proponents step forward because they have confidence that regulators will give them a fair hearing. The public should have confidence in the process as well.

Today, however, they are increasingly under attack from people who think it's possible to say 'no' to everything. These well-organized and often well-funded opponents declare that they're entitled to the final say on multi-billion-dollar projects. They say 'no' regardless what the experts decide after careful review of thousands of pages of studies prepared for resource projects by engineers, biologists, economists and other experts. Everything to do with resource development and economic growth, it seems, is just too risky.

But do these naysayers offer solutions? No. They rarely provide a viable alternative to generate the high-paying jobs that the resource industry provides. They just say no.

It's reasonable to ask if this kind of disruption will discourage investment in our province — and if the vast majority of British Columbians consider these attempts to subvert our democratic process acceptable.

British Columbians should think about what's truly at stake when a resource development is proposed.

A pipeline, a mine or a hydroelectric facility creates hundreds or even thousands of short and long-term jobs. Hydro power and natural gas keep our homes bright and warm on cold winter nights. We need coal to make concrete for hospitals, schools and apartment towers. Wood products feed our construction industry and keep many small towns alive. Pipelines deliver fuel for cars, truck, trains and ferries.

You may notice ICBA lawn signs lawn popping up in some Metro Vancouver communities, bearing a simple message: 'let's build prosperity for our communities.'

We're hoping that people will think about what responsible economic development can do for us. It creates growing and thriving cities. It means jobs for our kids. It helps pay for community centres and libraries, and hospitals and schools. It means more doctors, nurses and teachers while keeping the cost of government affordable for everyone.

Just one single project such the Trans Mountain oil pipeline expansion will generate 108,000 person years of employment and create \$18.5 billion in revenue for government.

The city of Burnaby alone will take in near a quarter of a billion dollars in property tax payments over 20 years of operations on an expanded Trans Mountain line. Each year the city will receive enough municipal tax revenue to fund the Burnaby public library system with enough left over to fund 29 additional library staff positions. New revenue from the expansion could pay for 132 additional firefighters or the full cost of garbage collection every year.

In the years ahead, many important decisions will be made about projects that will sustain those jobs and create thousands of new ones. We urge all British Columbians to speak up so that decision-makers hear, loud and clear, that the majority of citizens want a strong economy based on a realistic vision of our future.

Philip Hochstein
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