

POLICY UPDATE FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



A couple of important policies issues to keep you informed about. Of course these are only two of a number of key issues we are following on your behalf.

SPECULATION TAX - Your Chamber is keeping up its efforts to get the Province to step back from implementing this proposed tax. The Chamber sees value in investing in affordable housing but it does not believe this measure is the best way to achieve more attainable housing. In fact we believe it might do just the opposite by deterring investment from outside the province that stimulates our local

economy. At the recent BC Chamber AGM the Kelowna Chamber got unanimous support for its resolution that calls on the BC Government to shelve the idea altogether or at the very least provide some evidence as to the rationale as to why Kelowna and West Kelowna were specifically targeted (among eight total districts/municipalities in the entire province) for this tax.

The Kelowna Chamber is a founding member of the “Scrap the Speculation Tax” Coalition, a growing body of individuals, companies and organizations fighting to curb this proposed tax. To find out more about the coalition’s efforts check out their [website](#) and register your view. You’ll join the more than 2,200 people who have already sent letters to their elected officials on this issue.

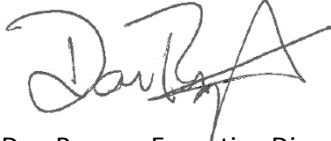
ELECTORAL REFORM - Should there be a referendum? What should the question be? With a growing rural-urban divide in BC, will proportional representation help close that gap or will it result in politicians being more loyal to their party rather than the constituents that elected them? The Kelowna Chamber is recommending that the government provide more clarity around this issue.

Despite the government announcing its referendum questions last week, the Kelowna Chamber continues to call for action on the policy that was adopted by the BC Chamber which recommends the BC Government:

1. Appoint a non-partisan panel to examine the likely outcomes of the various alternative systems and engage British Columbians in the discussion *prior* to issuing a referendum, similar to the previous Citizens' Assembly.
2. Clearly define the system of proportional representation that is to be considered well in advance of any referendum so voters are fully informed as to the pros and cons of that proposed system.
3. To make sure there is certainty of direction, adopt the same threshold used in previous referendums on the subject which required (to pass) at least 60% of valid votes cast in support of the proposal *and* a simple majority in at least 60% of BC ridings. This threshold would make it clear that voters are well informed and in favour of a specific change. The two-test model would also make it clear that the proposed system is supported among the majority of ridings across the province and not just in its most urbanized centres.

If you have any issues that are keeping you up at night or wish to comment on the issues above please don't hesitate to contact your Chamber through our easy-to-use [Issues Portal](#) on our website.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Rogers". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "D" and "R", and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dan Rogers, Executive Director
Kelowna Chamber of Commerce
Growing the people that power the Okanagan