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## NEWS RELEASE

### **B.C.'s Chambers pass policies to tackle sharing economy issues**

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#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**VANCOUVER, June 8, 2016** – B.C.'s Chambers of Commerce have passed two new policies to tackle issues in B.C.'s emerging sharing economy.

“The sharing economy brings exciting new business models and opportunities to British Columbians and Chambers are keen to see this new sector succeed,” said Maureen Kirkbride, BC Chamber interim CEO. “That said, we need to integrate these new models wisely to make sure we’re providing a level playing field for our existing businesses.”

The first new BC Chamber policy on the sharing economy, *Taxation of Short Term Residential Rental Units*, calls for Airbnb and similar sharing-economy operators in the accommodation sector to pay appropriate PST and Municipal and Regional Destination Tax.

“It’s important that sharing economy operators such as Airbnb pay appropriate taxes, to ensure we’re keeping things fair for our existing hotels and other tourism businesses as they try to compete with newcomers who, for now, aren’t paying tax,” Kirkbride said.

The second new BC Chamber policy on the sharing economy, *Ridesharing – Supporting Industry Innovation*, calls for the B.C. government to bring forward ridesharing regulations that establish province-wide rules for safety and consumer protection. The policy also asks the B.C. government to evaluate and remove unnecessary red tape on existing transportation providers, such as the taxi industry.

“Given B.C.’s affordability challenges, ridesharing is an appealing new model to many consumers, but we need to ensure that the industry is regulated for everyone’s safety,” Kirkbride said. “And again, we need to make sure we’re providing a level playing field for the existing taxi industry – and that also means reviewing and streamlining existing regulation for that industry.”

These policies were passed at the BC Chamber Annual General Meeting & Conference, the province’s foremost business gathering, held this year in Kelowna, May 29 to 31.

This unique grassroots policy-building forum brings together approximately 200 Chamber delegates from across B.C. to vote on new business/economic policies. Policies that are adopted become part of the BC Chamber’s advocacy agenda. This year, delegates voted on 55 proposed

policies. The first 29 were voted on May 30; please see news release [here](#). The remaining 26 were voted on May 31; please see news release [here](#). Of the proposed policies put forward this year, 49 were successful on the policy floor.

Preliminary versions of these policies are available on the BC Chamber website [here](#); please note that these may not be identical to the versions passed, due to amendments made on the policy floor.

*The BC Chamber is the largest and most broadly-based business organization in the province. Representing more than 125 Chambers of Commerce and 36,000 businesses of every size, sector and region of the province, the BC Chamber of Commerce is “The Voice of Business in BC.”*

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