

NEWS RELEASE

B.C.'s Chambers vote for reforms to local government, energy policy and Property Transfer Tax, plus oversight of product stewardship organizations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vancouver, May 26, 2014 – Business leaders from across B.C. have passed policies calling for local government reform, changes to energy policy, a new take on Property Transfer Tax and better oversight of product stewardship (recycling) organizations such as Multi Material BC.

These policies were passed at the BC Chamber Annual General Meeting & Conference, the province's foremost business gathering, held this year in Richmond May 23-24. This unique grassroots policy-building forum brought together approximately 200 Chamber delegates from across B.C. to vote on new business/economic policies.

This year, delegates voted in 39 policies; these adopted policies now become part of the BC Chamber's advocacy agenda.

Policies voted into force include:

- B.C. Municipal Property Tax Policy – Fairer Taxation for Business
- Review of Regional Governance Model in Urban Areas
- Rejecting Bylaw 280 to Allow for Private Sector Solutions
- Removing Uncertainty from Community Amenity Contributions
- Optimizing the Clean Energy Act for B.C.'s Economy and Environmental Policy Direction
- Reconciling B.C.'s Natural Gas Economic Development Policy with its Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Policy
- The Importance to the Economy of Expanded Oil Pipeline Infrastructure
- Property Transfer Tax Reform; Affordable Housing is Good for the Economy
- Ensuring Affordable Product Stewardship Programs

Policies passed at the AGM are available [here](#) and [here](#) (late resolutions). These have been updated to reflect amendments made at the AGM. Please note that these are still in draft form and undergo minor editorial changes/clean up before the BC Chamber publishes final versions.

Quotes from John Winter, president and CEO, BC Chamber of Commerce:

On the BC Chamber policy process:

“Our policy development process canvasses the best and brightest ideas from business leaders right across B.C. Once again this year, this unique grassroots process has delivered some excellent policy recommendations to help enhance B.C. as a business jurisdiction.”

On local government reform:

“Business leaders from around B.C. are calling for serious changes to how local governments interact with the business community. B.C.’s businesses are raising the alarm about burdensome property taxes and Community Amenity Contributions, a lack of democratic voice for our businesses through a business vote, and the overreach of some regional governments. The message is clear: For B.C.’s economy to grow, our local governments need to come alongside and support job-creating businesses rather than squeezing them dry.”

On energy resolutions:

“Energy policy is paramount in B.C. Our Chambers are calling for some changes to current policy to, among other things, reconcile B.C.’s ambitious economic policy on files such as LNG with our current greenhouse gas reduction policy.”

On the Property Transfer Tax resolution:

“Affordable housing is an important part of a strong economy but a continuing challenge in B.C., particularly in the Lower Mainland. B.C.’s Chambers are proposing some additional relief from Property Transfer Tax for B.C.’s new home buyers, while offsetting this lost revenue by raising the tax for non-residents of Canada. This approach is similar to what’s been done in other real estate investment jurisdictions such as Paris, New York and Hong Kong.”

On the product stewardship resolution:

“Our membership has seen first-hand the costs that product stewardship organizations such as Multi Material BC put onto B.C. businesses. Our policy calls for better oversight of this type of organization to ensure that any costs put onto businesses are fair, clear, and manageable.”



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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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