

NEWS RELEASE

BC Chamber, Lower Mainland chambers, call for rejection of Bylaw 280

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vancouver, May 7, 2014 – The BC Chamber of Commerce, together with its member Lower Mainland chambers, is calling on the provincial government to reject Metro Vancouver’s proposed Bylaw 280.

“This bylaw is basically a tool to ensure fuel for an unnecessary incinerator – and taxpayers and businesses are getting the bill,” said John Winter, president and CEO of the BC Chamber.

The bylaw sets the stage for tipping fee hikes on businesses that could amount to up to 100% or more within a few years in order to fund operating and capital costs such as a new waste-to-energy incinerator.

“This bylaw effectively dismantles a market-driven waste management system and installs a monopoly – and the fees that go with that,” Winter said. “If this bylaw goes forward, Metro Vancouver would have the unilateral power to hike tipping fees at whim, and with zero accountability.”

Winter also voiced strong concern with the bylaw for effectively shutting private industry out of providing cheaper, greener solutions to Metro Vancouver’s waste management needs, such as mixed-waste material recovery facilities (MRFs).

“Private industry is ready and willing to put its money on the table, and take on all the financial risk, to help Metro exceed its waste reduction target before more tax dollars are invested in disposal options,” he said. “Metro Vancouver needs to take a good hard look at those opportunities, rather than barreling forward with a plan that leaves taxpayers and businesses on the hook for a \$500 million incinerator that we simply don’t need.”

Winter said that the BC Chamber and the Chamber network across the region stands opposed to both proposed Bylaw 280 and the broader incinerator plan. Among other things, the Chamber network has voiced concern with the incinerator project’s business plan, which is premised on securing funding from two tiers of government plus achieving BC Hydro preferential rates for electricity produced.

“Already, the plan to achieve ‘green’ rates from BC Hydro for incinerator-generated power has been revealed as a non-starter,” Winter said. “With this shaky a business plan, quite frankly, what business organization could get behind this project?”

The BC Chamber and its partner chambers are calling on Metro Vancouver to pursue a more thorough examination of private-sector solutions to its waste management needs, with a focus on its own stated goal which is to maximize recycling and material recovery.

“Thus far, all viable options have not been on the table,” Winter said. “And we’re convinced that our region can, and must, do better.”

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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