
NEWS RELEASE

Christy Clark calls for a Municipal Taxation Review

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Vancouver, January 18, 2011 – Chambers of Commerce from across the province today welcomed the announcement from Christy Clark at the BC Chamber of Commerce Future Premier Business Panel that she is proposing a Municipal Auditor General.

“All of the candidates recognized the need for the provincial government to step in to ensure there is greater accountability and sustainable competitiveness at the local level,” states John Winter, President and CEO of the BC Chamber of Commerce. “There were suggestions regarding the creation of a Municipal Appeal Panel and a Municipal Report card, and the Chamber is very pleased with the recommendation from Christy Clark that she would create an Office of the Municipal Auditor General for local government spending and a review of property tax.”

The addition of a Municipal Auditor General is an important part of the BC Chamber’s policy on creating equity in the property tax system and bringing transparency to local government. Chamber members have made Reform of Local Government a priority area, and are focusing on the municipal taxation system in an effort to stop the subsidization of residential taxpayers through unfair business levies.

“While we recognize that many local governments face challenges providing services with limited financial means, the simple fact is that in community after community spending decisions are made and taxes set with little to no involvement by the public and no effective oversight,” continues Winter. “As with every level of government it is critical that the public have information to ensure that the taxpayer interests are protected and that elected officials at all level are held to account, an Office of the Municipal Auditor General would achieve this goal while respecting local autonomy.”

The full policy recommendation passed by BC Chamber members at its 2010 Annual General Meeting & Conference can be found at:

http://www.bcchamber.org/advocacy/policy/priority/local_government/creating_equity.html

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For further details contact;

John Winter
President & CEO, BC Chamber of Commerce
W 604 638 8110
C 604.376.3577
E jwinter@bcchamber.org