



An update on CHBA BC's government relations activities

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News from the Provincial Legislature

New Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

In mid-July, Premier John Horgan and the new provincial cabinet ministers were officially sworn in. The Hon. Selina Robinson, MLA for Coquitlam-Maillardville, was named the new Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and is the Minister Responsible for TransLink. Read the mandate letter from Premier Horgan [using this link](#). The letter asks Minister Robinson to take on a number of platform commitments, including the plan to build 114,000 affordable housing units, new student housing rules, and to fund 40% of the costs for new transportation projects.



The members of BC's provincial cabinet before the swearing-in. Source: BC NDP Twitter account.

CHBA BC CEO Neil Moody [spoke to the Journal of Commerce](#) about the new ministry, and the positive sign to see housing as a dedicated ministry portfolio.

Fall Legislature Sitting

The Speech from the Throne will take place on Friday, September 8, 2017. A budget update from Finance Minister and Deputy Premier Carole James is expected on September 11. This follows the 2016-2017 Public Accounts, [released on August 22](#), which indicated that British Columbia has an operating surplus of \$2.7 billion dollars.

Minimum wage increase

The minimum wage increase to \$11.35 on September 15, previously announced by the Liberal government, will continue as planned. In the [same announcement](#), new Labour Minister Harry Bains indicated that a Fair Wages Commission will be established and tasked with determining how to raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2021.

CHBA BC advocates that minimum wage should be tied to a standard formula such as the consumer price index (CPI). This would avoid large, arbitrary increases that are much harder for small and medium-sized businesses to absorb.

National Updates

Submit your feedback to CHBA National on new proposed tax changes for small businesses

In mid-July, Federal Finance Minister Bill Morneau announced the government was looking at changes to existing tax planning strategies for private corporations. The three areas under consultation include income sprinkling, passive investment income, and capital gains. To read the Finance Canada announcement, [use this link](#).

Many CHBA member companies are composed of family members working together, and could be impacted by these changes. CHBA National is collecting member insight and feedback on this topic ahead of the submission deadline on October 2, 2017. Please forward your comments to Jason Burggraaf at burggraaf@chba.ca.

CHBA submission on renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

The federal government solicited comments on NAFTA under four prescribed questions in an online form, ahead of the negotiations taking place this month. [This document](#) outlines the submission from CHBA National.

CHBA BC submitted similar comments to the British Columbia Trade Policy and Negotiations Branch, which is also participating in the consultations.

BC Energy Step Code Update

New resources are [available online](#) for the BC Energy Step Code. This includes technical information, training videos, guides, and other reports.



The costing study, outlining what the expected costs could be for each climate zone at each step for 12 different archetypes, will also be released in the coming weeks.

The **Building Safety and Standards Branch** will conduct a road show this fall in cooperation with CHBA BC to speak on the new Energy Step Code. BC Housing will also hold Building Smart training sessions in several cities. CHBA BC encourages all members to attend the training and information sessions in their area to learn more about the BC Energy Step Code.

We have moved! Please note CHBA BC's new address:
400-6400 Roberts Street, Burnaby, BC, V5G 4C9