

February 29, 2019

Honourable Bruce Ralston, MLA
Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology
Room 137 Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC
V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Ralston,

Firstly, on behalf of the Burnaby Board of Trade and our 1,100 local business members, I would like to thank your government for its attention to the skills shortage and the need for international talent through the BC Provincial Nominee Program's (BC PNP) Tech Pilot. This pilot has been a very successful and well-received program, and a great example of responsive, effective policy from government.

Today, I am writing to encourage your ministry and the provincial government to build on the success of this program by extending the BC PNP Tech Pilot beyond its current June 2019 expiration date, and to incorporate it into the Provincial Nominee Program as a permanent feature, and to request an opportunity to engage with your office on addressing this issue.

While people are a crucial input for all businesses, in certain industries such as the technology, digital media, and film and television sectors, having the right talent and skills is fundamental. As British Columbia continues to grow as a hub for these sectors, the demand for skilled talent will continue to grow. And with many businesses experiencing difficulties in finding local talent to fill vacancies, having an efficient system of skilled immigration is important to the viability and success of our economy, and is critical to positioning BC as a destination for the technology and innovation sector.

The Government of BC has responded to this need for access to international skilled talent with the BC PNP Tech Pilot. This pilot program is focused on supporting the attraction of skilled workers in 29 targeted jobs related to the technology, digital media, and film/television sectors. The BC PNP Tech Pilot offers several features that address the unique needs of these sectors, including providing dedicated staff to work with employers, prioritizing and expediting these applications, and offering more flexible eligibility requirements.

"The BC PNP Tech Pilot fits the unique needs of our industry and has made such a positive difference to both our company, and to a large group of our artists who are now able to apply to come and live in BC."

- BRON Animation Inc.
Burnaby Film/TV Animation Studio

Speaking with Burnaby Board of Trade members who have utilized the BC PNP Tech Pilot, we have heard positive feedback. Our members report timely and efficient processing of applications which in

turn allows these businesses to fill vital positions quickly that may otherwise have remained vacant for weeks or even months. In the eyes of our members, the BC PNP Tech Pilot has been a tremendous success and is a valuable tool to support the tech sector and its continued growth both here in Burnaby and right across BC.

Given this success, and in light of the impending June 2019 expiration of the program, the Burnaby Board of Trade is voicing its support for the extension of the BC PNP Tech Pilot past June and is recommending that the provincial government incorporate the pilot into the Provincial Nominee Program as a permanent feature.

I would welcome an opportunity to engage with you or your office on this matter, and share some of the positive feedback and experiences related to the BC PNP Tech Pilot which we have heard from our membership.

Sincerely,



Paul Holden
President & CEO
Burnaby Board of Trade

cc: Hon Katrina Chen, MLA (Burnaby-Lougheed)
Raj Chouhan, MLA (Burnaby-Edmonds)
Anne Kang, MLA (Burnaby-Deer Lake)
Janet Routledge, MLA (Burnaby North)