

February 5, 2016

The Honourable Shirley Bond, MLA  
Minister of Jobs, Tourism & Skills Training & Responsible for Labour  
Room 138, Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC  
V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Bond,

On behalf of the Burnaby Board of Trade, the leading business association in Burnaby, I am writing to urge you and the provincial government to align BC's Family Day statutory holiday, currently held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of February, with the holidays of neighbouring jurisdictions which are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of February.

While BC has a statutory holiday on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of February, six other provinces observe holidays on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of February, which is also a federal holiday in the United States of America. I do understand that when the Family Day holiday was first proposed, a province-wide consultation was held which generated support for a non-aligning holiday. However, four years of this non-aligned holiday have shown in practice that it has negative impacts on the operations of businesses across the province.

For companies which conduct business in other parts of Canada or in the United States, this misalignment of holidays creates a barrier to commerce and trade. When offices in BC are closed for Family Day but firms are operating in all neighbouring jurisdictions, local businesses are unable to service their interprovincial or American customers. Then, come the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in February, the employees of those local businesses may be largely sitting idle, unable to reach those same clients who are then closed due to their holidays.

While I understand that legislation allows employers and employees to agree to substitute a holiday for any other day, this remains an imperfect solution for two reasons. First, few businesses have clients that are *solely* out of province, so closing on Family Day would mean they would then be unable to capitalize on local opportunities. Second, considering the rationale behind Family Day is to provide families "extra time together," requiring some employees to opt-in to work on Family Day while their friends and family enjoy the holiday would be unfortunate.

Through consultation with our policy committee, our Board of Directors, and our over 1,100 members, we have heard clearly that local businesses would prefer Family Day be aligned with other February holidays. In addition, our local destination marketing organization, *Tourism Burnaby*, has reviewed our proposal and also supports aligning Family Day. Therefore, I hope your ministry and the provincial government will seriously consider making this change and move Family Day to align with the other February holidays in Canada and the United States.

Sincerely,



Paul Holden  
President & CEO  
Burnaby Board of Trade

cc: Athana Mentzelopoulos, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Jobs, Tourism & Skills Training