

Hello Constituent!

Just a few days before Christmas and still there is such great progress being made in order to economically get BC through this tough year, take real action in cleaning up our environment, and support those who need help right now. I had to share this good news with you. Please take a look at some of the positive things coming to our community even as we all do our part to keep it safe throughout the holiday season.

Small and Medium business grant changes

The BC Government has been listening to businesses and stakeholders to learn how to improve the BC grants program and to expand eligibility. The number one priority is to get the money out the door to eligible businesses as soon as possible. Based on this review several adjustments have been made including a simplified application process and streamlined criteria that will make it easier for businesses to apply and get funding that will help them access \$10,000 and \$30,000 in non-repayable grants. The requirements for businesses to be in operation have been lowered from three years to 18 months at the time of application. There is also an additional amount available to tourism related business for up to \$15,000 on top of the base grant. Click here for more info.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/economic-recovery/business-recovery-grant>

Delivery fee caps for Restaurants

An Emergency Program Act (EPA) order has been created to place a temporary cap on fees charged to restaurants from food delivery companies to 15%, in order to provide immediate relief to our local businesses to ensure they can keep their business running and retain staff. An additional cap of 5% is also included for other related fees associated with use of the service, such as online ordering and processing fees. This will ensure that companies cannot shift their delivery costs to other fees. This EPA order will be in effect until 3 months after the Provincial State of Emergency is lifted. See the full news release here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PSSG0074-002133>

New cleanup funds to protect coastal waters, create jobs

Our government is providing more than \$9.5 million for projects to clear B.C.'s shores of marine debris and derelict vessels through the Clean Coast, Clean Waters Initiative Fund. This program will reduce pollution in sensitive ecosystems and protect fish and marine life. It will remove tonnes of debris and derelict vessels, create new jobs, support local governments and indigenous communities. Click here for more info

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020ENV0060-002071>

Provincial grants funding community arts, culture, sports

We want to ensure that the arts, culture and sports communities continue to enhance our quality of life in our communities. The BC government is providing \$45 million to local organizations in Community Gaming Grants for arts, culture and sports programs. When we can be together again we'd like to ensure that we can fully embrace these important aspects of our communities.

[More support for friendship centres benefits urban Indigenous peoples during pandemic](#)

Our government is committed to supporting Indigenous peoples across the province during this particularly challenging time. This one-time COVID-19 relief funding of \$7.8 million will help friendship centres continue to assist individuals, young families, single parents, youth and Elders through a mix of in-person and online services. The grant will help provide supports like meals and hampers, care packages for seniors and education kits for children. It aims to address three main priorities: 1) food security; 2) personal protective equipment and sanitization; and 3) equipment and supplies.

During the holidays, please be vigilant especially as we are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel in controlling this virus. We must hold on to what we've been practicing for the last 9 months. I'm very proud to be serving as your representative and I wish you all the best this cozy holiday season.

I leave you with a photo of my new garbs as And a link to the video of my reply to throne speech, highlighting a moment of reflection. Click on this link. <https://ronna-raeleonard.ca/news/reply-to-throne-speech/>



Ronna-Rae Leonard - Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole, and as Deputy Chair

My constituency office is available by phone or email. Our office will be closed on December 24th and will re-open January 4th. You can reach us at 250.703.2410 or Ronna-Rae.Leonard.MLA@leg.bc.ca if you have any questions or need assistance with provincial supports.

Sincerely,

Ronna-Rae Leonard

MLA Courtenay-Comox

COVID Resources:

- For medical info, visit bccdc.ca or call 811
- For provincial supports and BC's Restart Plan, visit gov.bc.ca/covid19 or call 1-888-COVID-19 (1-888-268-4319) or text 604-630-0300
- For employer guidelines on returning to work safely, visit WorkSafeBC
- Take the self-assessment at covid19.thrive.health
- For seniors looking for additional support, or for those looking to support seniors, call 2-1-1 or visit bc211.ca

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RonnaRaeLeonard/>

Instagram: @ronnaraeleonard

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYLQfuaKQV-itCluryo2hQg>

Website: <http://ronnaraeleonard.ca/>

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Community Office Hours: Monday to Thursday, 10 am to 4 pm

MY OFFICE REMAINS OPEN TO ASSIST BY PHONE OR EMAIL

www.ronnaraeleonard.ca



It is a privilege to live and work on the traditional lands of the K'omoks First Nations.

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