

Dear Constituent,

As the house has been in session, there has been a lot of action and movement. I'd like to share the many new initiatives and progress updates on all that the Province of BC is doing to increase the quality of life for ALL British Columbians, even (or perhaps especially) in the midst of change and flux.

Highlight:

On May 2nd the government of British Columbia took a massive step in dismantling systemic racism by introducing the anti-racism data act. This act will help identify gaps in programs and services, and allow government to better meet the needs of Indigenous, Black and racialized British Columbians. It is with great pride that this is the first of it's kind in Canada and was co-developed with Indigenous Peoples. When it was introduced in the house there was a unanimous standing ovation. I am extremely proud to be a part of these actions that are making a difference today

The premier's video announcement can be seen here: <https://vancouversun.com/news/b-c-introduces-monumental-anti-racism-legislation>

Find more details here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022PREM0027-000673>

Please scroll through to learn more about issues that are important to you, how to let your voice be heard, or read up on issues you'd like to learn more about.

Have your say

Rodenticide restrictions to protect wildlife. Add your comments online until June 19th here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/pesticides-pest-management/legislation-consultation/consultation>

Ways to **make sure industry pays the full cost of environmental clean up and reclamation**. Only a few days left to give your feedback online. Deadline May 28th. Click here: <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc/consultation/public-interest-bonding/>

The Province is launching an online public survey to help identify gaps in **B.C.'s consumer protection laws** and understand any effects they have on British Columbians. Closes June 13th. The survey link can be found here: <https://feedback.engage.gov.bc.ca/698712?lang=en>

Browse **all categories** seeking public engagement here: <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc>

Local

Saying Goodbye to Stocky

Last week we said our final Goodbye to Stock Edwards. Last year, it was my honour to pay tribute to Stock in the Legislature on the occasion of his 100th birthday. [link] This week, I shared the sad news of his passing, as I remembered his legacy as a WWII hero and his continuing support of the work of Ducks Unlimited to protect and preserve our environment [link]

Agriculture

Local Land Match marks BC milestone. In April, Minister of Agriculture and Food, Lana Popham was in town with the Young Agrarians to celebrate over 200 land matches with young farmers. [B.C. Land Matching Program reaches new milestone | BC Gov News](#)

[Training supports transition for agricultural workers](#)

[New funding sprouts more growth for B.C. seeds](#)

More support coming for B.C. farmers' markets <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022AF0017-000655>

Environment

[New oil and gas royalty system ending inefficient subsidies](#)

[Funding will boost role of B.C.'s forests in fighting climate change](#)

[Earth Day spurs action on plastic pollution](#)

[Grants reduce wildfire risks around communities in Coastal Fire Centre](#)

[Low-carbon fuel expansion cuts emissions, creates jobs](#)

[ICBC meets the needs Cyclists and other vulnerable road users](#)

New Ministry!!! (in case you missed it) Josie Osborne became the Minister of a new ministry: Ministry of Land, Water, and Resource Stewardship and responsible for Fisheries. [Here's a link to the letter.](#)

Affordability

Low-income families benefit from dental-care funding <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2015SDSI0014-000462>

Single-step certification will protect right to join a union <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022LBR0006-000485>

[Protection from high-cost lenders in place May 1](#)

Health

Nurses Week

May 9th – 15th was Nursing week! We applaud nurses for their dedication and are working still to recover from years of underfunding in the previous government.

In Question Period last Tuesday, Minister of Health, Adrian Dix gave an excellent summary of some actions currently happening to support our BC nurses:

“The exceptional actions that have taken place throughout our health care system over the last two years have resulted in some of the best outcomes in the world with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic. That's the work of nurses, and the member is right to say they deserve credit.

But I have to say this. When you look at what's happened with nursing in B.C.... The members opposite talk about the numbers of nurses. LPNs up 11.9 percent. Registered nurses — not my numbers, the college — up 15.1 percent from 2017 to 2020. Registered psychiatric nurses up 16 percent. Nurse practitioners up more than 100 percent. Those are the numbers. That's what has happened.

Is that sufficient? I don't think so. That's why we're adding more nursing spaces. That's why we're making it easier for internationally educated nurses to come.”

Supporting international nurses into B.C.'s health system

BC Family Doctors Day – May 19th

I was so pleased to attend the doctor day breaker in Victoria this week. Happy to see our local Doctor, Rachel Mackenzie in attendance. (See photo below).



[Year 2 of surgical renewal delivers most surgeries ever completed in a year in B.C. | BC Gov News](#)

[Centre for young people with extraordinary health needs takes next step](#)

[B.C. expands cancer coverage for firefighters](#)

[BC PharmaCare provides new, expanded coverage](#)

[Expanding access to mental health supports for health-care, social service workers](#)

Social Justice

B.C. government provides more support for newcomers - displaced Ukrainians and new refugees
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022MUNI0027-000701>

[Ukrainians fleeing violence get immediate MSP coverage](#)

Below is a photo of the Rally for Ukraine last Sunday.



Police reform act – Report <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022PSSG0032-000672>

New service helps clarify rights under Mental Health Act

B.C. prioritizing negotiation over litigation for Indigenous rights

B.C. provides First Nations with \$74-million grant to make up for lost gaming revenue

Indigenous-led organization to manage, distribute safety-planning grants

Funding helps 60 organizations tackle racism

Indigenous-led plan for community centre moves forward

Quality of Life

Funding for the Arts

This week was Creative Industries Week, a week to celebrate B.C.'s wealth of creative talent. B.C.'s creative industries are some of the best and biggest in the world, and our province is:

- the largest motion picture hub in Canada,
- the second largest English-language book publishing market in Canada,
- the third largest centre for music in Canada,
- and the third largest motion picture hub in North America!

Many of our local music events and art festivals have received funding, from the province including The Vancouver Island Music Festival and The CV Art Gallery.

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022TACS0031-000746>

Below is me with BB8 as part of Creative Industries Week



Royal BC Museum Project. This funding will protect our cultural icons, keep visitors safe and accessible, create new exhibitions that reflect B.C.'s rich and diverse history in a culturally respectful, and inclusive way, while bringing jobs to BC and tourist engaged. [Minister's statement on Royal BC Museum business case | BC Gov News](#)

[New regulation next step toward barrier-free B.C.](#)

[Arts space funding Comox Valley Art Gallery – accessibility](#)

<https://www.comoxvalleyrecord.com/community/comox-valley-art-gallery-recvies-grant-for-capital-improvements/>

[More playgrounds!!!!](#)

Since the introduction of the Playground Equipment Program, over 231 have been built across the province, including 3 here in Courtenay-Comox: Airport Elementary School, Huband Elementary School and Courtenay Elementary School.

[B.C. forestry industry to benefit from trade office in Vietnam](#)

[New actions strengthen diversity, equity in arts funding](#)

[Local Tourism Events Resume Throughout BC](#)

[Most BC Parks open for May long weekend](#)

Have a great May long weekend!!!

Is someone in your life, your workplace, or church celebrating a Milestone birthday or anniversary? Make sure to put in a request for a letter from your MLA. Requests are made online here: <https://www.protocolapplications.gov.bc.ca/CMSForm>

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about any provincial issue, please don't hesitate to reach out. We are here to help you. Our office is staffed from 10am-4pm Monday -Thursday. If you come by simply knock or call 250.703.2410 to grab our attention. If you require an appointment, please email: Ronna-Rae.Leonard.MLA@leg.bc.ca.

Sincerely,

Ronna-Rae Leonard

MLA Courtenay -Comox

If you wish to be unsubscribed to this newsletter – simply respond “UNSUBSCRIBE” to this email.