

2020 UBCM Resolutions Book Addendum

Section SR

Community Safety

SR11 *Police Act Review*

UBCM Executive

Whereas the Province has convened a special committee to review the *Police Act*, which outlines the delivery of policing services in British Columbia;

And whereas the current structure excludes local representation on the special committee, despite local governments collectively spending more per year on policing services in British Columbia than any other order of government:

Therefore be it resolved that the provincial government commit to thorough consultation with local governments prior to the implementation of any changes to the *Police Act*, including recommendations made by the Special Committee on Reforming the *Police Act*.

UBCM Resolutions Committee recommendation: **Endorse**

Resolutions Committee Comments:

The Resolutions Committee notes that the UBCM membership has not previously endorsed a resolution seeking thorough consultation with the provincial government prior to the implementation of changes to the Police Act.

However, the UBCM membership has consistently endorsed resolutions related to issues regulated through the Police Act (e.g. provincial policing, auxiliary policing, police funding models, structure of policing).

The affordability and sustainability of policing is a long-standing issue. Provincial data indicates that in 2018 local governments spent over \$1.3 billion on policing services, more than twice as much as the provincial government.

UBCM Executive comments:

Background:

The Police Act provides the framework for the delivery of police services throughout British Columbia, including responsibilities assigned to the Province and local governments. Under the Act, the Province is responsible for the provision of policing services to local governments under 5,000 in population and unincorporated areas. Local governments over 5,000 in population assume responsibility for providing, and bearing the necessary expenses of, policing within their boundaries.

In June 2020, the Province announced that it would be undertaking a review of the Police Act. As part of this commitment, a Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act has been established, with a mandate to research and make recommendations regarding the following:

1. **Key Reforms:** *Examining reforms associated with independent oversight, transparency, governance, structure, service delivery, standards, funding, training, education and other issues to help modernize policing.*
2. **Social Issues:** *The role police play in addressing key social issues, such as mental health and wellness, addictions and harm reduction.*

3. **Systemic Racism:** Exploring racism within the RCMP and other police agencies, and any impacts on public safety and trust in policing.
4. **UNDRIP:** Ensuring consistency between the Police Act and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Special Committee intends to conduct research and engage with stakeholders regarding the above issues. A final report will be completed by May 14, 2021.

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UBCM Policy Position:

The Resolutions Committee notes that the UBCM membership has not previously endorsed a resolution seeking thorough consultation with the provincial government prior to the implementation of changes to the Police Act.

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Current Status:

Following the June 2020 announcement by the Province, UBCM delivered correspondence to Minister Farnworth, seeking representation on the review committee. The Minister responded by noting that the Province intended for only Private Members of the Legislature to be included on the committee.

The all-party Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act has elected to take a two-phased approach to its work, including consultation with stakeholders.

- **Phase 1 (September - October 2020):** Consultation with other ministries and independent offices, provincial organizations, community advocacy groups, Indigenous communities, subject matter experts, and other impacted individuals.
- **Phase 2 (Winter 2020 – Spring 2021):** Open public consultation.

UBCM has accepted an invitation to make a presentation to the Special Committee on October 1, 2020, as part of phase 1.