

March 16, 2017

The Honourable Mike Morris
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
Room 028, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4

RE: Legalization of Marijuana

Dear Minister,

I write to you today regarding local government concerns related to the legalization of marijuana in Canada. BC local governments have adopted resolutions requesting direct involvement in the process to establish a regulatory approach to marijuana, and that marijuana taxation revenue be fairly distributed among all orders of government, including local governments. I would like to request a meeting at your convenience to discuss these issues, and other local government concerns that we may address through collaborative solutions.

To this point, UBCM has not been presented with an opportunity to directly engage in meaningful discussion with the provincial government regarding a framework for legal access to marijuana, and in particular a marijuana distribution framework. With federal legislation expected in the near future, it is important that local governments and the Province begin discussion on how to best prepare for the ensuing changes.

Potential costs and responsibilities related to marijuana legalization without any confirmed source of additional funding could place a large burden on local governments, who may bear substantial enforcement and oversight costs, and at this point only receive 8-10% of overall taxation revenue. Previous experience with medical marijuana has shown that, without funding, local governments face difficulties in enforcing laws, leading to the unregulated environment that exists today. As such, UBCM would greatly appreciate an opportunity to discuss the concerns of BC local governments as they pertain to marijuana legalization. Bhar Sihota, UBCM Policy Analyst, may be reached at (604) 270-8226 Ext. 114 or bsihota@ubcm.ca to arrange a meeting.

We look forward to partnering with you in the development of an effective regulatory framework for legal access to marijuana.

Sincerely,



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President, Union of BC Municipalities

cc: *The Honourable Peter Fassbender, Minister of Community, Sport, Cultural Development, and Minister Responsible for TransLink*