

October 31, 2017



The Honourable Ralph Goodale
Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

The Honourable Scott Brison
President of the Treasury Board
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

RE: BC Local Government Concerns with Bill C-7

Dear Ministers,

On behalf of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), I am writing in response to the September 25, 2017 letter from Minister Scott Brison to UBCM President Murry Krause regarding Bill C-7, *An Act to amend the Public Service Labour Relations Act, the Public Service Labour Relations and Employment Board Act and other Acts and to provide for certain other measures*. Although Bill C-7 has received Royal Assent, I would like to elaborate on some of the points made by UBCM in our April 10, 2017 letter, in addition to addressing the aforementioned letter from Minister Brison.

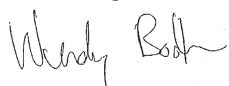
I would like to begin by noting that UBCM recognizes the RCMP's right to collective bargaining. However, the removal of bargaining exclusions, originally included in Bill C-7, puts local governments in danger of absorbing significant operational costs. Expanding the scope of collective bargaining has the potential to impact the affordability and sustainability of policing in communities that utilize the RCMP's services. Local governments currently face significant cost pressures, with many urban local governments allocating nearly 30% of their budgets towards protective services. The increased operational costs that will likely result from this new labour relations system could affect service delivery in our communities. The actions of the RCMP Commissioner, under the management rights clause, will be crucial to preserve the affordability and sustainability of the RCMP. Providing some measure of local flexibility would be helpful, as the needs of urban municipalities are often different than those of rural municipalities.

In Minister Brison's September 25, 2017 correspondence, it was mentioned that on several occasions meaningful consultation took place between Public Safety Canada and provincial and territorial jurisdictions regarding Bill C-7. Unfortunately, despite local governments paying the majority of policing costs, they have not been

consulted in the same manner as provinces and territories. British Columbia (BC) municipalities over 5,000 in population pay 70%-90% of the cost base in their respective policing agreements yet have not received equal opportunity to discuss their concerns with Public Safety Canada. As the Treasury Board will be leading future collective bargaining negotiations that will financially impact local governments more than any other order of government, UBCM and the BC RCMP Local Government Contract Management Committee (LGCMC) would request a mechanism to provide input into these negotiations.

In BC, binding arbitration has contributed to significant increases in independent police and fire compensation, disproportionate to compensation increases for other unionized local government staff. To ensure the long term sustainability of RCMP policing in BC, we encourage the federal government to provide a means for local governments to participate in the development and operation of this new labour relations system. I would like to request a meeting, at your earliest convenience, to provide a local perspective and discuss the implications of this new labour relations regime on local governments. Bhar Sihota, UBCM Policy Analyst, may be reached at (604) 270-8226 Ext. 114 or bsihota@ubcm.ca to arrange a meeting.

Kind Regards,



Wendy Booth
UBCM President