

November 24, 2021

The Honourable Marco E. L. Mendicino
Minister of Public Safety
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Re: RCMP Collective Agreement – Impacts on Local Governments

Dear Minister Mendicino,

I write to you today, on behalf of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), regarding the recently ratified collective agreement for RCMP members below the rank of inspector, and reservists. The UBCM Executive, at its November 19, 2021 meeting, confirmed its support for the request made by the Federation of Municipalities, which is calling your government to cover all retroactive costs associated with the implementation of the collective agreement.

The lack of consideration for the unique position of local governments, including concerns previously expressed by UBCM, has been disappointing. With the cost of protective services already approaching 30% or more of many local government budgets, UBCM has consistently requested that the collective agreement include provisions recognizing a local government's ability to pay and inability to absorb any large lump-sum payments. The collective agreement's payment schedule for retroactive costs does not consider this position.

Local governments have always stood to absorb the largest cost impact from this settlement, but have not received adequate communication or consultation. UBCM also, through its participation on the Contract Management Committee, has not been adequately briefed by the federal government regarding the impacts of the collective agreement. As a result, local governments are in the midst of their annual budget process, yet still have not received official notification outlining exact costs associated with the settlement.

The need for adequate communication and consultation is even more critical given that the financial guidance provided to BC local governments in 2018 has fallen well short of the terms outlined in the collective agreement. Given these shortcomings and the long-term cost increases that will fall on local governments, it is appropriate that the federal government absorb all retroactive costs as a means to preserve the affordability and sustainability of RCMP contract policing.

As the new collective agreement is implemented, the need for adequate communication and consultation with local governments remains a key issue. UBCM continues to request an appropriate mechanism for local government input into the ongoing development of the new labour relations regime.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Councillor Laurey-Anne Roodenburg
UBCM President

cc: *The Honourable Mona Fortier, President of the Treasury Board*

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance

Wayne Rideout, Assistant Deputy Minister and Director of Police Services, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Commissioner Brenda Lucki, Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Mayor Joanne Vanderheyden, President, Federation of Canadian Municipalities

Encl.



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OF CANADIAN
MUNICIPALITIES

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City of Prince George, BC

**Chief Executive Officer
Cheffe de la direction**

Carole Saab
Ottawa, ON

October 8, 2021

The Honourable Bill Blair, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

Subject: Federal/Municipal Collaboration- RCMP Contract Policing

Dear Minister Blair:

On behalf of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), please accept my congratulations on your re-election. You and your government have been steadfast partners to municipalities across Canada throughout the pandemic, and I look forward to continuing our productive federal-municipal partnership to keep Canadians and our communities safe.

There are several important shared public safety priorities we look forward working with you and your officials on, including tackling the opioid crisis, the national flood risk task force and the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements (DFAA) program, and regulatory measures related to procession and cross border trafficking of handguns.

I am writing today to follow-up on my July 28, 2021 letter, and draw to your attention urgent municipal concerns about costs associated with the recent collective agreement between the federal government and National Police Federation (NPF), particularly the impact of retroactive pay for NPF members.

FCM's Board of Directors, representing municipalities of all sizes from coast to coast to coast, met on September 24, 2021, and agreed this issue is an urgent priority given the potential impacts on municipal finances and RCMP service levels for local governments that depend on RCMP contract policing.

With the public release of the contract this summer, we now know that there will be a need for significant retroactive pay going back to 2017. Many local governments—especially rural communities who are disproportionately impacted by this change—are very concerned about how to pay for these significant, unbudgeted costs. Municipalities were not consulted at any stage—prior to or during the negotiations process—despite the outcome of these negotiations having a direct and significant impact on municipal operations. This is particularly concerning given that where municipalities were advised to prepare, estimates of 2.5% per year increases turned out to be far lower than those articulated in the final agreement. Local governments continue to pay a rapidly growing share of policing costs, but have no ability to run deficits, and the revenue generation tools at their disposal are limited and inflexible.

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In this context, as the new RCMP labour relations framework is implemented, **FCM and our partner provincial and territorial associations representing municipalities in affected provinces are calling on your government to:**

(1) absorb all retroactive costs associated with the implementation of the new RCMP labour relations regime; and

(2) commit to ensuring municipalities are properly consulted prior to implementation of measures that impact local fiscal sustainability and ability to maintain effective levels of police services in communities.

Without support from other orders of government, a significant increase in pay and unbudgeted retroactive payments for RCMP officers will result in financial pressures on local governments that may force them to make very difficult choices at a time when their primary focus needs to be on economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Going forward, municipalities are eager to work more closely with the federal and provincial governments and RCMP on critical issues including contract policing. By strengthening our partnership on public safety across orders of government we can better ensure the financial sustainability of contract policing services and maintain the service levels necessary for community safety.

Thank you for your attention to this time sensitive matter. FCM will follow up directly with your office to arrange a meeting to discuss this issue in more detail. If you or your staff have any questions, please feel free to contact Margot Cragg, Manager of Government Relations, at mcragg@fcm.ca or 613-907-6246.

Sincerely,



Joanne Vanderheyden
FCM President
Mayor, Strathroy-Caradoc, ON

CC:

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, P.C., M.P.
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance
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