

December 14, 2017

Hon. John Horgan
Premier of British Columbia
West Annex, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Premier Horgan:

Re: Site C and Workforce Development

I am writing on behalf of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 115 to offer our support for the government's social and workforce development objectives related to the Site C dam project.

In your announcement yesterday, you said the Government and BC Hydro will proceed with construction and complete the dam. The debate around this project has been intense, and you made it clear that this was a difficult decision for you.

In our view, public support for Site C will increase if the Site C management model is redesigned to focus on benefits for B.C. workers and B.C. communities. Properly managed, this major project can leave a legacy for communities – a more diverse, better trained and more experienced workforce, coupled with the expansion in local businesses and services that will flow from the employment of local people in well-paid jobs.

You made reference in your announcement to the need for community benefits programs. Along with other Building Trades unions, IUOE 115 has proposed the implementation of a Community Benefit Agreement at Site C, and on all significant public construction projects in the provincial sphere. In our proposal, these agreements would:

- Provide fair wages and benefits to all workers on the public projects, as negotiated by participating unions.
- Set compulsory standards on the hiring and training of apprentices, and the use of certified labour for skilled trades work.
- Guarantee industry-standard safety rules and requirements.
- Bring employers and unions together to advance local hiring, including jobs and training for women and Indigenous people.
- Prohibit the importation of workers from offshore to replace Canadians, especially under sub-standard employment and living conditions;
- Guarantee wage predictability and no labour disruptions to support project completion on time and on budget.



Community Benefit Agreements will ensure that public spending on construction brings public benefits. They will build on a collaborative approach that prevailed in B.C.'s public projects before 2001. It is notable that while the BC Liberal government abandoned the project labour agreement model in the early 2000s, major private sector developers have continued to negotiate project labour agreements to ensure cost stability, safety and quality.

We look forward to assisting you in defining a workable Community Benefit Agreement for Site C that will address the interests of union and non-union workers, those who aspire to work in construction, and the broader community.

Thank you for signaling your openness to moving in this direction. I wish you the very best.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Cochrane". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and a long, sweeping tail.

Brian Cochrane
Business Manager

Cc: Tom Sigurdson, BC Building Trades Council