

Mayor Lisa Helps and Council
City of Victoria
Municipal Hall
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, B.C. V8W 1P6

March 27, 2019



Re: Proposed class-action lawsuit against oil and gas companies

Dear Mayor and Council,

On behalf of the Tourism Industry Association of British Columbia (TIABC), I am writing to urge the City of Victoria to reconsider its motion to endorse a class-action lawsuit against oil and gas companies.

While TIABC agrees that climate change and environmental degradation are major challenges to British Columbia's visitor economy and individual destinations, we also believe there are more effective policies the city can pursue to meet its environmental goals and objectives, as well as create the sustainable community its residents desire.

As you are aware, tourism is one of Victoria's leading business sectors. The contribution by local tourism operators to the cultural mosaic, employment, taxes, and other amenities has allowed the city to flourish and earn a reputation as a place to live, visit and invest. Steps taken by council, such as support for a class-action lawsuit, not only hurt Victoria's strong international reputation and lead to boycotts, but can be counter-productive to sustainability efforts as operators pull their investments or halt plans for worthwhile initiatives. If anything, tourism operators are integral to implementing the city's 2050 climate leadership plan and are keen to work with members of council and staff in this regard.

Much work is being done by the BC tourism industry to implement long-term sustainability plans. To that end, TIABC encourages the City of Victoria to work with Destination Greater Victoria, individual tourism operators and sector associations like ours on climate change strategies that benefit residents and visitors, and help mitigate some of the environmental impact of the growing visitor economy in the region.

Sincerely,

Walt Judas
CEO, TIABC
778-953-0620