



July 29, 2020

Hon. John Horgan, Premier
Hon. Harry Bains, Minister of Labour
Hon. Lisa Beare, Minister of Tourism, Arts & Culture
Government of British Columbia
Victoria, BC

RE: URGENT – Employment Relations and the Temporary Layoff Provision

Dear Premier Horgan, Minister Bains, Minister Beare,

I am reaching out on behalf of the British Columbia Hotel Association to bring immediate and necessary attention to the growing labour concerns and issues surrounding our accommodation industry. Since we first felt the devastating impacts of COVID-19, accommodators across British Columbia have been doing everything in their power to protect their employees while trying to ensure the survival of their businesses.

For your reference, the BC Hotel Association has been advocating for the accommodation industry for the past 103 years. BCHA is the voice for our industry locally, provincially, and nationally. With over 800 member hotels and associate members representing over 60,000 employees and 80,000 rooms, the sector's value to the hospitality and tourism industry, and provincial economy is significant – contributing more than \$3.2 Billion in annual revenue. The properties that BCHA represents are diverse from hotels and motels, to union and non-union properties. At the heart of the accommodation industry, each property in the province contributes to the community, the BCDMO ecosystem and to the province at large. It is important to also note that approximately 80% of these businesses are small and family-owned; these are the most vulnerable.

Local Unite 40 has recently voiced concerns over workers being terminated as a result of COVID-19, and is asking for Government intervention regarding an extended recall period. Currently there is collective bargaining ongoing with a number of hotels across the province, which includes the master agreement as well as individual hotel bargaining. Collective bargaining is the respected process by which to negotiate lay off terms along with other inclusions in collective agreements. Moving temporary lay off timelines from collective bargaining to government responsibility is not supported by the BCHA. BCHA supports the temporary lay off application process put in place, we have a webinar scheduled on August 6th in partnership with the Ministry of Labour for our industry to walk through the process and to ensure joint employer-employee applications are submitted in a timely manner.

As the temporary layoff provision remains a fundamental issue concerning our members, we are also very appreciative to Assistant Deputy Minister Danine Leduc for the work being done to assist our members as the extension deadline draws nears. While we hope the temporary layoff variance tool will prove successful for our members, we do acknowledge that this is an option only afforded to non-union properties.

The impact of the pandemic has been devastating for our industry. Employees and employers alike. Simply put, without adequate relief and support for our industry, properties will become insolvent; we anticipate that as of Spring 2021, over 30% of accommodations in British Columbia will be forced to as a result. This means that close thousands of jobs will also be permanently lost, an outcome that no one in our industry wants. Our work on behalf of our industry is to work hand in hand with Government to ensure our accommodation community can continue to thrive and provide



employment and economic prosperity in every community in the province. BC Hotel Association has submitted a recovery submission, which I look forward to discussing with you in the coming weeks.

We understand that considerable work will be needed to rectify the impacts that this pandemic has had on ours and other industries across the province. I am requesting a meeting with Premier Horgan, Minister Bains and Minister Beare as soon as possible. I will make myself available in person, my phone, or by zoom at your convenience.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your response.

Best Regards;

Ingrid Jarrett
President & CEO
British Columbia Hotel Association
ingrid.jarrett@bcha.com
250-864-3793