

Small businesses bearing the brunt

Over the course of the past months, I have visited small businesses in our community. Our conversations have brought home to me how much the vitality and vibrancy of North Vancouver depend upon small business owners. The pandemic has impacted so many people running small and medium-sized operations – from barbershops, convenience stores and fitness studios, to hotels, restaurants, and tourism services.

My constituency office has assisted North Vancouver small business owners and operators with some of the challenges they are facing, including navigating government assistance programs put in place since March. My staff have worked tirelessly to help ensure that all those eligible for CERB/CRB, CEWS, CEBA, CECRA/CERS and other vital programs have gotten the help they need.

The pandemic has hit different businesses in different ways:

- **Phil Nuytten of Nuytco Research** explained that delivery of specialty dive suits was delayed. This was reiterated by other businesses whose operations were constrained and normal delivery times could not be met.
- **Tony Mangiliman at Fiesta Filipino** provided an uninterrupted money wire service to the Filipino community through his convenience store. He has continued to operate throughout the pandemic with safety protocols in place.
- **Evergreen Computers owner Neil Davey** implemented significant health protocols to continue serving the public's increased need for technology. Some of their focus went to collecting, upgrading and providing laptops to schools, libraries and those in need of computers to access services.
- **Golestan Bakery owner Jalal Darvishi** continued to provide his staff of 14 with employment by tapping into CEWS despite facing eviction. A CEBA loan is now helping him to relocate his business, and CERS will assist with his ongoing business expenses.
- **Bruce Peters of Zazou Hair Salon and Academy** in Lynn Valley created an innovative, rigorous reopening strategy for the safety of both his clients and his stylists. However, border closures proved difficult for international students training in his studio, and for foreign workers normally eligible to fill vacant positions on his staff.
- **Restaurants, including Palki Best Indian Cuisine**, transitioned to take-out in order to survive the initial closure, and then developed protocols that would enable them to operate safely for sit-down food service.

I want to hear back from you!

North Vancouver Constituency Feedback Survey

TO FILL OUT SURVEY:

SCAN THIS QR CODE

OR

FILL OUT BELOW, TEAR-OFF FORM AND MAIL IT BACK.



1) On a scale of 1-5, how have you been coping with the pandemic?

1 2 3 4 5

Very bad Okay Very well

2) What are your 3 main concerns for the government:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

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We will do whatever it takes to help Canadians and businesses through the pandemic.

Diversity is our strength

Over the past number of months, the pandemic has dominated the media and public discussion. However, another issue that has also come to the fore during this period is that of systemic racism in our society.

The Black Lives Matter protests of the summer, which grew to encompass Indigenous, gender and diversity rights issues, focused our attention on inequities that exist within our society. This has generated discussion and action both nationally and locally.

Nationally, the federal government has underlined the importance of addressing issues of systemic racism and inequities. Earlier this fall, the federal public service hosted a Diversity and Inclusion conference, from which came information and recommendations to improve policies and programs, workplace inclusiveness and leadership. More broadly, the federal government has implemented new programs to address systemic inequality at all levels in Canadian society, including the Black Entrepreneurship Program and the Indigenous Community Support Fund and Nation Rebuilding Program.

Canada's first-ever Black Entrepreneurship Program

- **National Ecosystem Fund** to help Black entrepreneurs get funding and capital, mentorship, financial planning services, and business training.
- **Black Entrepreneurship Loan Fund** to provide loans for Black entrepreneurs to help them grow their businesses.
- **Black Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub** to collect data on the state of Black entrepreneurship in Canada to better inform policy-making.

Locally, the North Shore Multicultural Society held a well-attended virtual townhall on racial equity in late September. This was one event in a series of dialogues aimed at improving our collective response to issues in our community. Recently, local RCMP Superintendent Ghalib Bhayani established a Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Advisory Committee in North Vancouver, with a view to achieving actionable changes to assist police with equity and diversity issues. Personally, I am very pleased to see the conversation and progressive actions being taken nationally and locally to start addressing these important issues.

In The Community



With Derek Fry, Royal Canadian Legion, on Remembrance Day

Getting our flu shots from Pharmacist Moh Kazem



Saulteau Nation recognition for our work to save the Southern Mountain Caribou

Our constituency office is open by pre-arranged appointment. Please call to book a time should you wish to visit. All services are available by phone, email and virtual platforms.

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JONATHAN WILKINSON

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, NORTH VANCOUVER

HOLIDAY EDITION 2020

North Vancouver Constituent Update



Making progress on Climate Change – a gift for our future

We have learned some very valuable lessons from our experiences with this pandemic – that we can be nimble and creative in our response to crisis, and that we have the resources if we have the will to respond. The pandemic has also taught us the importance of being proactive and taking collective preventative action.

Our kids deserve a clean future.

The **Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act** ensures that all future governments will be held accountable to ensure clean air and clean water.



As we come through this – and we will – climate change continues to pose a threat to the health and economic well-being of Canadians even as we focus on the immediacy of the pandemic. While we must continue to protect and support Canadians during this difficult time, we must also lay foundations for a sustainable, more resilient, more prosperous and fairer future. Going forward, we can no longer think of economic opportunities without also considering environmental impacts. Canadians understand that creating jobs and taking action on climate change must go hand-in-hand.

“ It is the best gift we could possibly give them, this or any year. ”

CON'T



The Accountability Act provides for significant accountability and transparency mechanisms that will ensure that all governments will be held to account in terms of actions taken to fight climate change. The Act establishes an independent Net-Zero Advisory Body – a group of up to 15 experts from across the country with a diverse range of experience and expertise, including business and labour, Indigenous Peoples, clean technology, youth and environmental organizations. The Advisory Body’s ongoing advice to government over the next 30 years will be informed by extensive consultation and engagement with Canadians. Its initial work will focus on identifying actions that support both net-zero and economic recovery from the pandemic.

The Accountability Act also provides for independent review by the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development to ensure third-party scrutiny – and assurance of the quality of the reports that future governments will produce.

Canada is making a commitment to urgently address the climate crisis while building a net-zero economy that will enable us to be successful and prosperous in the emerging low-carbon, global marketplace.

As a nation, we cannot afford inaction in combatting climate change. Tackling this challenge and making the most of new opportunities will require resources, pragmatism and Canadian ingenuity. We have the tools to make this happen – including a skilled and innovative workforce that is already rising to the challenges of emissions reduction and clean growth. And we have the drive born of a chance to create a future we can pass along to our children and grandchildren with confidence and pride.

It is the best gift we could possibly give them, this or any year.

My warmest greetings for the holiday season, and for a safe, healthy and lower-carbon New Year.

Keeping the kids safe and in school

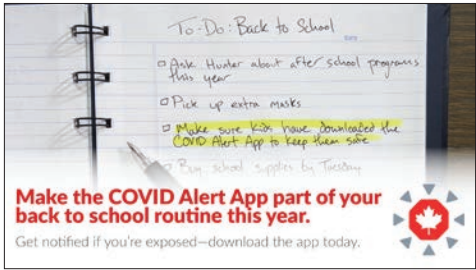
Amid the dizzying uncertainty forced upon our daily lives by COVID 19, there is one certainty that is clear and absolute – our collective responsibility to do everything possible to keep our children safe and well.

“The NVSD is greatly appreciative of the Federal Funding that was provided to the Province of British Columbia to support education during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

– Mark Pearmain, Superintendent

This imperative lives deep within our DNA. As a parent myself, it has been a source of comfort to see how our local school district has managed getting children back to school over the past months, restoring a sense of some normalcy in many households. If we were to fail in these efforts, we would risk not only the health of the children and educators in our schools, but also every other person with whom they come into contact.

Locally, School District 44’s Restart Plan (www.sd44.ca) demonstrated a level of effort, planning and commitment focused on getting this reopening right – amid extremely uncertain and difficult conditions. Strict protocols to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission in schools, and to manage when an exposure occurred, were put in place. The District has worked closely with Vancouver Coastal Health to provide impacted school communities with timely and accurate information. To date, while there have been limited exposure events in some schools, North Vancouver has managed the situation well.



\$2B FEDERAL FUNDING

The resources of provincial governments and school boards have been stretched in their efforts to ensure students, teachers and support staff can learn and work in a safe environment throughout the pandemic. While fully respecting the fact that education falls under provincial jurisdiction, Prime Minister Trudeau provided a \$2B Safe Return to Class Fund to ensure that provincial governments and school districts had the resources they needed to get kids back to class safely. Here in BC, that translated into \$242M from the federal government to supplement the \$45.6M earmarked by the provincial government for back-to-school safety.



SD44 Superintendent Mark Pearmain filled me in on how that additional funding from the federal government has been carefully used here in our school district, targeting very specific supports. These federal dollars went directly to fund:

- teaching staff to operate the Transition Support Option for parents needing more learning support before sending their kids back to school full time;
- teaching staff to expand the Hospital Home Bound program for students who cannot attend school due to medical challenges;
- teaching staff to reduce class size;
- custodial staff to have a full-time custodian for every school every day;
- cleaning supplies, equipment and PPE for staff;
- a teacher and the resources to develop and implement a Français Langue 12 on-line course for French Immersion students across the province, a joint project with the Ministry of Education.

SAFE RESTART

The \$2B funding for the Safe Return to Class Fund was provided in addition to the more than \$19B in federal funding that was dedicated for the Safe Restart Agreement to help provinces and territories safely reopen their economies over the fall.

We are all rightfully still very worried about COVID-19. The federal government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to focus on keeping Canadians safe and supporting Canadian families and our economy so that we come out the other side of this pandemic strong.

There has been a real sense of community, care and consideration throughout North Vancouver schools to maintain safe and healthy environments. We have proven time and again that we know how to support each other in times of need. As we move into the new year in classrooms across SD44, and across the province and country, I have no doubt that this sense of community will be at the forefront of everything we do.

Jonathan's zoom meeting with youth from across the North Shore.



Federal COVID support – necessary and sustainable

This holiday season, the lights in our windows and the food on our tables feels so much more needed and appreciated than in other years. Many of us are experiencing dramatically reduced celebrations for the holidays this year, as COVID-19 continues to limit our interactions and, for so many, our financial stability. But there clearly remains a lot of uncertainty and concern.

Many Canadians are, I know, thankful for the extensive support programs launched by governments across this country to protect and support Canadians during the pandemic. However, many are also anxious about the costs to the government of such supports.

A poll conducted in the fall for the organization Canada 2020 found that the vast majority of Canadians support the spending that has been undertaken, while an equally large number say they have concerns about the size of the deficit resulting from these supports. The poll also revealed Canadians overwhelmingly agree that, after this pandemic is over, they expect our political leaders to focus on putting Canada back on a more sustainable fiscal track.

GLOBAL CONSENSUS

There seems to be a strong consensus on these issues – which is not always the case in a country as diverse as ours. With approximately \$300B committed this fiscal year to addressing the multi-layered effects of the pandemic, Canada will have a large budgetary deficit from 2020. Canada is not alone in this regard. There is a global consensus that governments around the world have needed to be aggressive in their spending in the face of COVID-19.

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), an organization of 189 countries, “the pace of economic recovery will depend on policies undertaken during this crisis. If policies ensure that workers do not lose their jobs, renters and homeowners are not evicted, companies avoid bankruptcy, and business and trade networks are preserved, the recovery will occur sooner and more smoothly.”

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), an international body focused on promoting policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world, recently stated, “Debt sustainability is not an immediate risk, at least in advanced economies.”

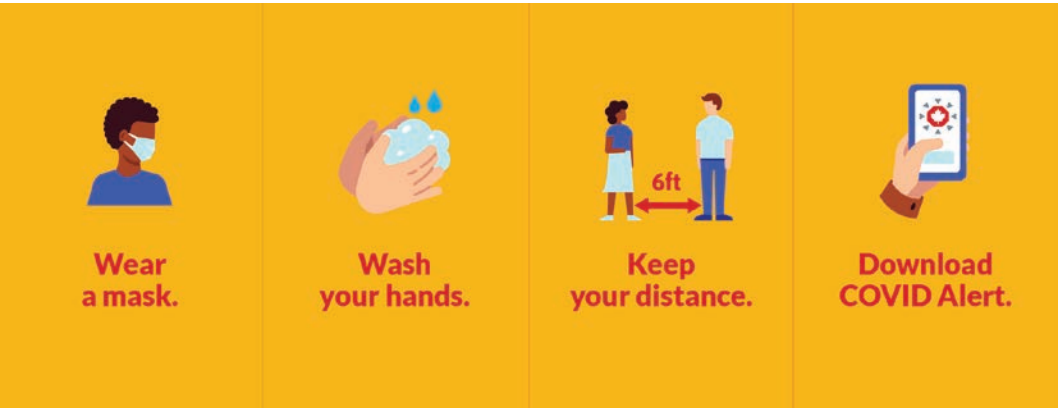
Fortunately, Canada’s fiscal position entering the pandemic was among the strongest of its G7 partners. The primary reason for this is the record low cost of borrowing – our interest rates. As The Economist magazine has noted, “In the long term, low interest rates change the dynamics of debt. If growth and inflation together exceed the interest rate, existing debts shrink relative to GDP over time.”



We are now locking in the low cost of borrowing for decades to come. In the words of the fall Speech from the Throne, “This Government will preserve Canada’s fiscal advantage and continue to be guided by values of sustainability and prudence.” In response to the Throne Speech, Canada’s leading banks confirmed that our “federal finances are still viewed favourably in a world where deficits have blown up virtually everywhere.”

FUTURE COSTS A REALITY

There is no escaping the fact that, even with current low interest rates, there are future costs to higher government debt. But it is possible to support Canadians during the pandemic, ensure a strong economic recovery and return to a prudent fiscal track in the short- to medium-term. In the mid-1990s, Canada cut its debt-to-GDP ratio in half within a decade due to responsible fiscal policy and strong economic growth. The COVID-19 emergency has had significant costs. But Canada would surely have had a deeper recession and a bigger long-term deficit if the Government had done less.



LET’S STAY IN TOUCH!

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