



December 7, 2022

Honourable Niki Sharma  
Attorney General  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Attorney General Sharma:

Thank you for agreeing to serve as Attorney General. I trust in your leadership at this critical time to deliver results for the people of British Columbia.

British Columbians continue to recover from and respond to the upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate related natural disasters, while global inflation is driving up costs for more households and the world's economic outlook is concerning. Now more than ever, we need to focus on building a secure, low emission, sustainable economy, and a province where everyone can find a good home – whether you live in a rural area, in a city, or in an Indigenous community. We will continue working toward true and meaningful reconciliation by supporting opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be full partners in the inclusive and sustainable province we are building together.

Our government is committed to delivering on the mandate British Columbians gave us in 2020. Together we can make life better for people in B.C., improve the services we all rely on, and ensure a sustainable province for future generations.

As we renew our work, my priority as Premier is to deliver results that people can see and feel in four key areas:

- **Attainable and affordable housing:** In the wake of soaring prices and record migration to B.C., we will take on the important work of building new homes that are actually attainable for the middle class, while continuing our work to address the housing crisis for those in distress on our streets.

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- **Safer communities:** To address concerns about public safety, both for the people struggling with mental health and addiction on our streets, as well as the feeling that downtown centres are not as safe as they were before the pandemic, we will work with our partners at all levels of government, the justice and health care systems, the non-profit sector, and community leaders to find solutions for this complex challenge facing our province, and work overtime to seize the assets of high-level criminals.
- **Improved health care:** Amid unprecedented pressures we will continue to work to strengthen our public health care system, from family doctors to new hospitals, so care is there for each of us when we need it.
- **A sustainable, clean, secure, and fair economy:** We will continue our work investing in British Columbians, fighting racism and promoting equity, and building a clean economy that addresses our obligations to combat climate change by driving down emissions, while creating good, family supporting jobs.

As Attorney General, part of your unique role is to ensure the rule of law is protected as a foundational principle in British Columbia. One of the greatest challenges and opportunities of modern British Columbia is to find ways to meaningfully recognize the two systems of law in our province – Indigenous and Colonial – that co-exist and are recognized by our Constitution, our Courts, and by our government through the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples incorporated into provincial law.

In addition to this historic work and partnership with Indigenous Peoples that you will continue, British Columbians expect government to enhance and build on remarkable modernization work undertaken in our Courts and Tribunals during the COVID-19 pandemic. Virtual bail hearings, remote testimony, virtual courts, and other innovations were embraced across the justice system during the pandemic. Our government will continue to support the Courts of British Columbia in further enhancing processes and services.

Currently, public concern about community safety coming out of the pandemic is also front of mind for British Columbians. The public, and our government, believes that social and health issues like mental health, addiction, and poverty are not matters for the criminal law, and yet many people struggling with these issues end up in conflict with the criminal law and the justice system in our province. Our response to this issue requires your ongoing support with colleagues in Cabinet and community members across the province.

Since 2020, our government has made considerable progress on important initiatives including:

- Launching the First Nations Justice Strategy with the BC First Nations Justice Council and the federal government toward dismantling systemic racism and discrimination from our justice system and revitalizing Indigenous legal traditions.
- Advancing recommendations from the German Report and the Cullen Commission on money laundering.
- Taking significant steps to honour Japanese Canadian internment survivors and their families.
- Adopting the *Anti-Racism Data Act* to dismantle systemic racism and improve access to government programs and services for Indigenous, Black, and other people of colour.

As you continue to make progress on items in the previous mandate letter, over the remaining period of this mandate I expect you to prioritize making progress on the following:

- Continue to work with the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Indigenous communities and the BC First Nations Justice Council to advance the First Nations Justice Strategy.
- Continue to move forward to support the judiciary in the modernization of B.C.'s courts and legal processes to make it easier for the public to navigate our justice system and to better support victims and families.
- Work with community partners, including B.C.'s Human Rights Commissioner, to develop and pass an *Anti-Racism Act* to better serve everyone in B.C.
- In collaboration with the Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equity, take steps to address non-consensual disclosure of intimate images.
- Support the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General and the work of the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions to build safe and healthy communities through implementation of the Safer Communities Action Plan.
- Support all ministries to deliver initiatives listed in the Action Plan required by the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, to keep building strong relations based on recognition and implementation of the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples protected in Canada's constitution.

To assist you in meeting the commitments we have made to British Columbians, you are assigned a Parliamentary Secretary for Anti-Racism Initiatives. You will work closely together and ensure your Parliamentary Secretary receives appropriate support to deliver on the priorities outlined in the mandate letter issued to them.

Our work together must continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of people in this province. Issues not contemplated by this letter will come forward for government action and I ask you to bring such matters forward for consideration by the Planning and Priorities Committee of Cabinet, with the expectation that any proposed initiatives will be subject to the usual Cabinet and Treasury Board oversight and include measurable outcomes for British Columbians. Your ministry's priorities must reflect our government's overall strategic plan as determined by Cabinet.

British Columbians expect their elected representatives to work together to advance the public good. That means seeking out, fostering, and championing good ideas regardless of their origin. I expect you to reach out to elected members from all parties as you deliver on your mandate. Further, you will build thoughtful and sustained relationships both with title holders and through public and stakeholder engagement plans that incorporate diverse perspectives early in the policy development process. Federal partnerships and resources will be particularly important and, on behalf of our government, you will engage with the federal government on advancing priorities to improve the lives of British Columbians.

As a Cabinet, we will uphold the highest standards of ethics, collaboration, and good conduct in service of the public, and as a Minister of the Crown, you are expected to review, understand, and act according to the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act*. You will establish a collaborative working relationship with your Deputy Minister, and the public servants under their direction, who provide the professional, non-partisan advice that is fundamental to delivering on our government's priorities. Your Minister's Office must meet the highest standards for integrity and provide a respectful, rewarding environment for all staff.

The rural and urban challenges that we face are urgent and complex. In response, we must be forward-thinking, strategic, and ready to work across disciplines and old divisions in new ways. Labour shortages are a major issue globally, and British Columbia is no exception, including in the public service. Maintaining the BC Public Service as an employer of excellence will be key to retaining and recruiting the diverse professionals we rely on to deliver essential services, advice, and analysis.

At the core of this work is listening and responding to the priorities of people in B.C. Together, we can deliver results in very real ways – ways that people can see, feel, and touch, and that change their lives for the better. Thank you for doing this important work with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Eby", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Eby, KC  
Premier