



MEDIA RELEASE

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Kelowna Chamber Sees All Policies Adopted at Annual Policy Session Electoral Reform Policy Asks for Clarity

Kelowna: With nearly 400 votes up for grabs, the Kelowna Chamber tabled six policies at last weekend's annual BC Chamber policy session in Kamloops for delegates. Months of work with Kelowna business members led up to the writing of the policies, and all six were adopted on the floor.

"'Engaging Business and Community on Electoral Reform' is a timely and necessary policy," says Carmen Sparg, President of the Kelowna Chamber. "We created this policy in concert with the Kamloops Chamber, knowing that they were hosting the annual conference, and that key provincial politicians would be attending." In fact, the conference hosted speakers Andrew Weaver, Carole James, and Andrew Wilkinson, among other elected officials, so the policy topic was a timely one.

The policy calls for the same voter number threshold required for approval (in elections) as was used in the 2005 and 2009 referendums, as well as asking for a delay in the fall 2018 referendum date until the government provides more clarity. The policy was unanimously adopted.

The Kelowna Chamber also tabled "Agricultural Land Commission Regulation Reform: Creating Principles Based Farm Land Use Policy" which was adopted. Domenic Rampone, Kelowna Chamber Director, and co-author of the policy said, "We call on the government to review current ALC Land Use Policy to look at the needs of the entrepreneurial farmer and determine how more flexibility can be part of the ALC Act interpretation." Several other chambers tabled agricultural-related policies; however, the Kelowna policy struck a positive chord with delegates.

As well, Kelowna policies on Scrapping the Speculation Tax as anti-Canadian; encouraging growth in Digital Media; reforming Property Transfer Tax; and, improving Inter-Provincial Trade Barriers restricting the beer and wine industries were adopted at the policy sessions. Adoption by the BC Chamber means that all six Kelowna policies will form part of the provincial chamber's discussions with appropriate ministries in the government.

Carmen Sparg said, "Submitting pertinent policies that explain and advance the business needs of our members is at the heart of what we do as a Chamber. We are focused on member needs and ensuring that our voices are heard at every level of government. Policy development includes member engagement, social impacts and fiscal responsibility. This is one way we do it."

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