



Honourable John Horgan, MLA
Premier of British Columbia
West Annex, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B.C.
V8V 1X4

July 9, 2021

Dear Premier Horgan,

I am sure you will agree that the deaths of more than 700 British Columbians during last week's heat wave is a heartbreaking tragedy and something that should drive us to do everything within our power to prevent it from ever happening again.

I am writing to you today because countless British Columbians found themselves unprepared for the extreme heat wave that our province faced. It is vital that we better understand what happened and what changes need to be made to ensure that we are prepared to prevent the unnecessary loss of life when the next heat health emergency occurs.

It is for this reason that I am calling for an independent review of the response to the heat wave we experienced, in order to understand how we can better respond to future extreme heat events. I think we can both agree this is likely to become a more regular occurrence.

At minimum, the review would examine these critical questions:

- Why did the Province not take a stronger role in communicating the threat posed by the heat?
- Why did provincial operations — like emergency health services — fail to respond quickly and effectively?
- What extra precautions were taken to assist seniors and ensure isolated individuals had the support they needed?
- Did the Province have a plan to provide cooling centers and water to people in need?
- What work was done as a follow-up to the 2019 report that outlined significant concerns about an event of this magnitude?

The Chief Coroner has been clear that the public didn't understand the serious risk that the heat wave posed. To have people dying alone at home or in the driveway of a fire hall is completely unacceptable. We need to understand where the response was inadequate and develop a clearly articulated plan to ensure that these tragic outcomes are not repeated when our province faces future extreme weather events.

When hundreds of British Columbians lose their lives it is a reasonable expectation that there be a thorough review, ongoing planning, and a commitment to improve the response in the future. British Columbians deserve nothing less.



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

I urge you to proceed with an independent review.

I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

Shirley Bond
Interim Leader of the Official Opposition
MLA, Prince George-Valemount