

March 30, 2021

John Horgan
Premier of B.C.
premier@gov.bc.ca

Adrian Dix
Minister of Health
HLTH.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Dr. Bonnie Henry
Provincial Health Officer
ProvHlthOffice@gov.bc.ca

Harwinder Sandhu
MLA for Vernon-Monashee
Harwinder.Sandhu.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Re: Regional benchmarks needed

Premier Horgan, Minister Dix, Dr. Henry, MLA. Sandhu

The Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce realizes that immediate action was required given the increased cases of Covid-19, and we thank you and your team for the leadership that has been provided during this challenging time.

However, we urge the provincial government and the provincial health officer to establish clearly defined criteria in each region of B.C. to determine if restrictions are enhanced, maintained or eased. We need to remember that B.C. covers a vast geographical area and the conditions in one region may be vastly different than those in another region. By establishing such region-based benchmarks, businesses can monitor the data and adjust their operations and staffing levels if caseloads begin to rise.

A clear goal for region-based case numbers may also mobilize individual citizens to enhance their personal protocols to reduce transmission.

We appreciate that the pandemic is a very fluid situation and the need for health care professionals and government to respond may occur quickly. That said, business owners need as much advance notice as possible about public health order changes so they can adjust hours of operation, staffing and inventory. What appears to be last-minute decisions only places more burden on businesses and their employees.

In conclusion, there is a need for a regional approach to public health orders and our Chamber is ready to work with you to establish such a process that prioritizes public health while encouraging economic activity.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Krystin Kempton, President
Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce

CC. Shirley Bond, Interim Leader of the Official Opposition
Victor Cumming, City of Vernon Mayor
Okanagan Indian Band
Kevin Acton, Regional District of North Okanagan Chair
Jim Garlick, District of Coldstream Mayor
B.C. Economic Development Association
Okanagan-Shuswap Chambers of Commerce
BC Restaurant and Foodservices Association