



December 17, 2019

Her Worship Linda A. Brown
Mayor, City of Merritt
2185 Voght St.
PO Box 189
Merritt, BC V1K 1B8

Dear Mayor Brown and Councillors:

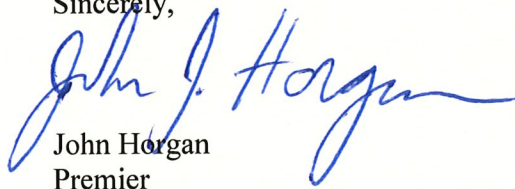
Thank you for taking the time to meet with me during this year's UBCM Convention. These discussions play a significant role in creating government policy and help me to understand how my government can provide support to the many diverse communities of British Columbia.

I was grateful for the opportunity to sit down with you and discuss the forestry industry in Merritt. It was important to discuss the suspension of the Rural Dividend Program this year. Our government is temporarily reallocating funds to a new forestry worker program in an effort to adjust to recent devastating fire seasons and support workers and communities that have been heavily impacted. We recognize the impact this temporary suspension may have on rural and Indigenous communities and we will be working across ministries to identify options for alternative funding. Exploring diversification in the forestry industry is also important and I was interested to hear more about Sundial and your city's support for growing the cannabis industry in rural BC.

I was pleased to hear that the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Merritt and the Upper Nicola Indian Band, Lower Nicola Indian Band, Coldwater Indian Band, Nooaitch Indian Band, Shackan Indian Band and the Thompson Nicola Regional district was successfully signed. This was a momentous occasion for citizens of all these communities and marks another important step on the road of reconciliation.

Thank you for all you are doing for the people and City of Merritt and I want you to assure that I will continue to advocate for Merritt and the complex issues that your community is facing.

Sincerely,



John Horgan
Premier

cc: Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development