NCLGA
North Central Local Government Association

June 2, 2017

Her Honour, The Honourable Judith Guichon
Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia
Government House
1401 Rockland Avenue
Victoria, British Columbia V8S 1V9

Dear Lieutenant Governor Guichon,

On behalf of the communities we represent, I am writing to inform Your Honour of concerns we have surrounding the recent pact amongst Opposition Members of the Legislature. The regional catchment area where our local governments operate (municipalities, First Nation communities and regional districts) accounts for eighty percent of BC's exports, eighty percent of BC's agricultural land, sixty percent of the Province's indigenous population and some of the largest resource development projects in North America.

As you know, it is a vast area covering roughly two thirds of the Province and a full third of all First Nations' traditional territories. Legally, economically, environmentally and logistically, northern BC is currently one of the most strategically important places on the continent.

Our principle concern is that the Opposition contract neglects and disempowers the community-level administration of this region and the families who live and work here. We are a non-partisan association and make no distinction between political ideologies. Our goal is to simply advance the environmental, social and economic well-being of all communities in central and northern BC. Our expectation is that all provincial members from the ten "northern" ridings, regardless of party membership, have open and transparent input into any deal-making that might shift the balance of power from one set of MLAs to another. Furthermore, Mr. Horgan and Mr. Weaver have released their written contract for public consumption, but their verbal, closed-door deliberations were not conducted publically.

Undisclosed side agreements and informal understandings are not uncommon in government. But when the informal contracts and discussions involve a major shift in governance, it leaves communities unprepared and vulnerable. As you are aware, what might seem like a small, simple shift in direction behind closed doors can have a major impact on many of our resource dependent communities.

Lastly, we are concerned that the formal, written, binding agreement between the NDP and Green Parties goes far beyond the more common, flexible understandings between MLAs and fetters the discretion of individual members of both caucuses in fulfilling their constitutional roles and duties. That

206-155 George Street, Prince George, BC V2L 1P8
Phone: 250-564-6585 www.NCLGA.ca

fettering of the independent discretion of elected representatives is contrary to both the spirit and the letter of the Canadian Constitution. Respectfully, if the Crown acts in reliance on the agreement we are concerned that the Crown could be condoning an unconstitutional scheme.

We are not submitting to you a desired outcome. Our preference is merely for open and transparent deliberations, and that all citizens of this great province have fair access to the decisions that are fundamental to the structure and direction of their government.

Sincerely,

Shaely Wilbur
President,
North Central Local Government Association

206-155 George Street, Prince George, BC V2L 1P8
Phone: 250-564-6585 www.NCLGA.ca