

**HONOURABLE GORDON CAMPBELL
PREMIER OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
UBCM CONVENTION ADDRESS**

Thank you, Robert. After that introduction, there's not really anything left for me to say, so I appreciate it.

You know, I was just in California at a meeting with Governor Schwarzenegger and about 1,000 other people preparing for what they called the Road to Copenhagen, which is when all the national governments will come together and try and find a protocol that will allow us to reduce the impacts of greenhouse gases on our world, build economic strength and do it together.

Before I left, Governor Schwarzenegger said to me: "Premier Campbell, go back to the UBCM and pump them up" I can tell you I've been coming to these conventions for some time now. I actually have been running for office for 25 years now, and after the reception that I had last night, I can tell you you've pumped me up, and I want to say thanks to UBCM for coming with such a positive and a constructive agenda to this convention in 2009. Thank you all very much.

You think to yourself: 25 years ago I first ran for public office. I thought to myself: boy, does time ever go quickly when you're having a good time. It's just incredible. You know, this is one of those exciting jobs where every single day there's a surprise that comes along — every day. You know, you get used to this. The first time here, you say, "You're kidding," and then after 25 years, you learn a number of different ways of saying that. "You've got to be kidding." "Please, tell me you're kidding." And sometimes I just say: "Holy smokes. I guess you're kidding."

You know, it's not too long ago when Colin Hansen used to walk into my office, and he'd come forward, and he'd say – you know – those six great words: "Gord, we have got a surplus." I liked meeting Colin in those days. Today he doesn't even call me Gord anymore. It's: "Premier, are you sitting down?"

You know, it is an incredible thing when you think about this province and you think about those surprises and those shocks that may hit us day in and day out, but British Columbia has always had the ability to keep going, keep focused on what's important for the province, what's important for your community. The UBCM's always had that ability to focus, and that's really what the strength of British Columbia is. It's the spirit of British Columbia to recognize that there are tough times and there are good times, but boy, when there are tough times, we roll up our sleeves; we keep going. That's what made British Columbia great in the past, and it's what's going to make us great in the days, the months and the years ahead.

It's felt a little bit in the last little while kind of like the first term that we were elected as government. It seems like things just seem to get worse. We'd inherited a \$4 billion structural deficit. We had pine beetle to deal with. We had a tech meltdown to deal with. And you know, it was pretty interesting. As we got through that first little chunk, we were riding high in the polls. We were feeling pretty good. It was like fate looked down at us and said: let's test them a little more. We got hit with 9/11, and then we got hit with the war in Afghanistan, and then we got hit with SARS, and then we got hit with mad cow disease, and then, just for good measure, we got hit with the Okanagan fires and record droughts and record floods.

Oh, fate was cruel, but we were tough. We kept moving, we kept going, and in fact, we came out even stronger. There was a time – I still remember it – there was a time when we were recording record surpluses. We were paying down public debt. We were reducing taxes. We actually had more jobs in British Columbia than we could fill. And it was for one reason. It's because you, because British Columbians, kept working, kept going through it and built an even better province. That's the UBCM, and that's the spirit of British Columbia.

Well, 2008-09 has been an incredible year. As we've gone from the last convention to this convention, a lot of things have gone on — a lot. We've gone from projecting an \$800 million surplus to a \$2.8 billion deficit. That's a big challenge. We all knew that was happening over the last year, and we all watched it happen, and we all have struggled with how we can deal with it and how we actually can make sure we build the kind of province we want, not just for ourselves but for our kids and for our grandkids.

You know, it's interesting, because when you think about it, over the last year, since the last UBCM convention, here in the province of British Columbia the people of our province have elected every single level of government office. Local, regional, provincial, federal: every single elected official has gone to the ballot box and has either been elected or not over the last year — 1,700 elected officials in the last year. Hundreds of them are new, and I want to say, you know, for those new people, welcome. You're going to have the time of your life. This is going to be something that you will never forget. It is a huge commitment from you, it's a huge commitment from your families, but I can tell you there is no more important job for you to do than to represent your community at local government or provincial or federal government. I want to say thanks to you for running and congratulate you all for being elected.

Now, none of us can claim over the last year that we didn't know what we were getting into. It is important for us I think to recognize some of the challenges that we all face. You identified a number of them at your convention.

With that in mind, I want to let you know that the province is embracing your resolution to call for a Local Government Week in British Columbia. Local Government Week will not only tell people about what you do; it will ask them how we can do it better. If we can encourage our universities and our colleges and our young people to get involved, it will make it a strengthening part of what we do in British Columbia to build our public life.

I want to thank UBCM for bringing forward that idea, and I commit to you that we will work with you to make it work in every community of the province of British Columbia. So thank you very much for that.

I also know that as we sit here today there's just a little over two years to go until the next election in 2011. So today I want to let you know that we'll be forming a task force to make recommendations on writing a new local government election act. It will be stand-alone legislation that will modernize your election rules and create a single, province wide electoral process for local government elections. It's in everyone's interest to update our Local Government Election Act and to create a new, designate a new chief electoral officer as an independent supervisor, administrator and enforcer of common local government election processes.

The task force will be co-chaired by the new president of UBCM, Harry Nyce. And let me just say this, Harry; I think it is a proud day for UBCM and a proud day for British Columbia when we've elected one of the first Aboriginal government representatives to the UBCM. Congratulations. I'm looking forward to working with you.

I should just say that particularly as we all gather together here in these Coast Salish territories, I recognize in the front row a true leader — not just a First Nations leader, a British Columbia leader and a Canadian leader. Joe Gosnell joins us today too. Thank you very much for being here, Chief Gosnell.

The president of the UBCM will be joined by the Minister of Community and Rural Development. The task force will include two other UBCM designates and two government MLAs who will actually look for submissions, for recommendations, for different ideas on how we can move ahead. There's an opportunity here for you to ask yourselves questions like: what should the local government election cycle be; do you want to go back to two years, like it was, or should you go forward to four years? We should ask ourselves those questions, and you should come forward with recommendations. It'll be

your call; this will be your election act. But let's work together to make sure that it works for all of us in British Columbia.

There's an opportunity to adopt principles of the provincial Election Act including: disclosure, spending limits and other changes that will improve fairness, accountability, transparency and public participation. Perhaps it's time to restore the voting rights for industrial and business property owners in our communities. These are the kinds of questions that we'll be asking the task force to consider as it does invite its submissions and undertake its deliberations.

I'm going to be asking the task force to submit its report to the government by May 30, 2010. We will develop the legislation that we'll present to the Legislature in concert, and we will introduce it to the Legislature prior to your next election in 2011.

I want to say again I can't tell you how much I appreciate the partnership that the UBCM has been willing to establish with us in government as we strive to make British Columbia a better place to live with even better government.

So thank you very much to you, Robert, and to all of you for your resolutions. I appreciate that.

We have a record of success when we work together. When I asked you all to join us in the all-encompassing task of working on climate change, 176 communities agreed that they would sign B.C.'s Climate Action Charter — 176 communities. I want to congratulate each and every one of you for that leadership. B.C. may well be the only jurisdiction in the world where a state or province and virtually every one of its local government partners has undertaken to become carbon neutral by 2012. Thank you all very much for that commitment.

You should be rightly proud of what you're doing, and you should recognize, as you think of your theme of champions, that in this regard you are certainly champions and your work is being recognized. It's been recognized not just by the province; it is being recognized internationally.

It's recognized as an important fight not just to take us in the right direction, but it's a huge opportunity for us in the province as a job generator. Our initiatives around climate are going to make us a clean energy powerhouse that will create new uses for wood through bioenergy and new opportunities in every single region of British Columbia. Again, thank you for your leadership in making this a reality.

It is important for us I think to recognize that in solving the challenges that we face with regard to the climate that we have, the most expansive opportunities there can be in front of us. It's going to stimulate research, investment, innovation, and it will make us world leaders in cellulosic ethanol, fuel cell technology, run-of-the-river power solutions, and more.

Our natural gas industry in British Columbia is now, hands down, our single largest resource revenue generator. It presents a great bridging technology to the low-carbon world. We're building on this potential. We can open up that industry as never before by opening up the Northern Energy Corridor from Alberta to Kitimat, and we will make sure that as we move forward with that, we include first nations, we include communities, and we create economic opportunity right across the north of British Columbia.

We are going to open a brand new opportunity right along Highway 37 as we build that transmission line in partnership with the federal government and the private sector. We will open up not just new mining opportunities; we will open up enormous opportunities for clean power production, independent power production in that entire Skeena region and Bulkley Valley region of the province. It is a huge economic opportunity for us.

I want to say thanks to the federal government for coming to the table with \$130 million to help us close the gap that will allow us to move through that door into the world of opportunity it represents for the northwest of British Columbia.

The new green development plan opens a whole new future for forestry by capitalizing on its potential in bioenergy. We can create new jobs in rural and remote communities across B.C. by developing our potential in small-scale hydro projects, wind, solar, thermal and tidal power. We should capitalize on our competitive advantage to become a supplier of choice for clean power that can reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions in other jurisdictions as well. We will give bioenergy and other clean power producers the certainty that they need to invest literally billions of dollars and create literally thousands more jobs in the province of British Columbia to help stabilize our economic future and your communities' future, and we will do that together because that's how we're going to succeed in province of British Columbia.

It is important, I think, as we think ahead, to recognize that we are today. Not in the future – today. We are the world's third-largest clean energy research and development hub. It's that hub and the thousands of jobs it represents that will drive new transportation technologies, with lower carbon fuel, leading to higher efficiency and eventually to zero-carbon engines. New networks of natural gas and other low-carbon energies will require us to work together to maximize the potential of that incredible energy and entrepreneurial asset that we have in the province of British Columbia. These are technologies that will complement our record investments in public transit, and they will help us create the kind of future that every British Columbian deserves.

In the new world, the environment is the economy. Solving global warming is the solution to our need to create more jobs in energy, forestry, mining, construction in rural and British Columbia — you name it. We need to keep that in mind as we continue to grapple with everyone's number one priority in 2009, the economy. The economy, generating investment and generating jobs, is critically important to our future in British Columbia. Without a strong economy, we all know we don't have the resources that we need to provide the exceptional public services that people are used to taking advantage of.

In retrospect, it seems kind of hard to believe that just over a year ago we were still in the midst of one of the strongest economic booms in living memory. Since then, the world has been flipped on its head with the worst global recession in 27 years. It's a recession that's built on itself because the international community has suddenly discovered what they meant by "interconnectedness." What happens in one part of the world has a big effect on another part of the world. Even Canada, even British Columbia, have been hit by the last number of months.

I should say this today. I appreciate the fact that – you know, every minister has mentioned this to me — that all of you who have come as delegations have come with positive and constructive ideas of how we can actually deal with the challenges that are in front of us as a province. You all know that we ran out of money in the provincial government about \$2.8 billion ago. We're not only tapped out as a province, but we're tapping into our children's future earnings in order to pay for bills today.

People generally want three fairly simple things: more services, less taxes and no debt. We can't make that equation work if we're not willing to change how we do things. We have done this in the past. We've been willing to work together in the past, we've been willing to find new ways forward in the past, and we can do it again. We just have to commit ourselves to making it happen.

When all of us ran for office in the last year, we asked for the chance to make the tough decisions, to make the hard decisions. Now more than ever we have the chance. The fact is, making the hard decisions is one of the real perks of public office. Don't worry. We'll all be held to account. Our media will hold us to account. Our friends will hold us to account. The people next door will hold us to account. Actually, the electorate will hold us all to account. But it is what is important about being in public office.

Deciding to implement the HST for B.C. was hard. We all knew what would be said, and we didn't think it would be popular. But we were elected to strengthen our economy, to maximize opportunities for job creation in every region and to prudently manage taxpayers' moneys. We were elected to continue acting on climate change, to continue to build the new relationship with First Nations and to keep B.C. strong. We were elected on a budget that called for increased funding for health and education but that also committed to reduce administrative and discretionary spending by \$1.9 billion. I never thought that was going to be easy.

The problem with any number is it hides the challenges behind it, but you know, it's something that we have to do. It's something that we have to do if we're going to carry out our responsibilities to those who will follow us, and each of us, I believe, knows that our electorates want us to think long-term.

The fact is, no one predicted that we would lose \$0.5 billion in revenues in natural gas resources alone between June and September. No one predicted we were going to lose \$700 million in natural resource revenues in provincial sales taxes. No one predicted that we would lose \$1 billion between June 24 and September 1 in personal and corporate income tax. No one predicted that the Canadian dollar was going to go up from less than 80 cents to 93 cents between February and September of this year. The fact is it's tough to control the things that you have no control over. It's tough to manage them.

In spite of the impression that you may have been left over the last few weeks, I do think it's important to know this: the provincial budget in 2009 that we introduced in September has \$800 million more in expenditures than the one that we introduced in February. Our budget expenditures are higher by \$800 million. A good chunk of that is for increased income assistance from higher caseloads, for forest fires and for the flu.

Over the next three years total government spending will continue to rise from \$31.7 billion to \$34 billion. We're spending record amounts on K-to-12 despite declining enrolments. We are spending record amounts on post-secondary education.

We're increasing total health care spending by almost \$800 million this year alone. By 2011 half of our entire operating budget for all ministries will be gobbled up by health care.

We have no choice. We have no choice but to take a close and hard look at both our health and education services in the months and the years to come. They affect us all. We have to find ways to focus our resources and to integrate services. Our fundamental task is reduce avoidable costs and to focus more of each education and health dollar on students and patients and less on administration.

In education we're focusing even more attention on young learners. Any educator will tell you the most important years of learning are from the time you're born until when you're six years old. We know this. We know it, and we have to do something about it. It won't be easy, but it must be done.

We're going to expand our StrongStart Centres for preschoolers and their families to over 300 centres in every part of the province by next year. In 2010 we will begin implementing voluntary full-time kindergarten for five-year-olds, and that will be fully implemented by 2011. That small step alone will add \$150 million to our ongoing budget, but it's something we have to do for the young people of British Columbia if we want to meet our goals. We are going to think about them, we are going to work for them, and we are going to make sure that we deliver the kind of education services that they deserve.

We have to sort of ask ourselves questions about this. Maybe we need a new funding formula for K-to-12. Maybe we need to restore taxing authority for boards of education. Maybe we need to –

Go ahead, the boards of education. If you want taxing authority, be careful what you wish for.

Maybe we need to realign some of the responsibilities for providing services.

Here's a question. How can we better utilize public spaces from schools or community centres or provincial buildings to meet public needs?

Why not design neighbourhoods around a school that kids can walk to again? In the 1960s two-thirds of all kids walked to school. Today it's 13 percent. Think about that. Just a walk to school is all the physical exercise that they need in a single day, to walk to and from school.

We can do this, but there's only one way we can do it: by working together, by breaking the institutional barriers to stop us from doing exactly what we all know we have to do if we're going to integrate services. Let's decide to do that; let's commit to do that. And let's deliver it to the next generation of British Columbians because that's what they deserve.

In health care our aging population, new technologies and new drugs are going to continue to drive pressures in the health care system. Health care costs are going to continue to go up: we know this. We also know that by any measure the current rate of growth of health spending is not sustainable. Just think of this. If health costs grew at just the rate of inflation, we would eliminate our deficit in no time. As today's baby boomers enter retirement and consume more health services, health costs will continue to grow. But the number of people at work, the taxpayers who are there to support those health costs is going to begin to shrink. We know this, and we have to do something about it. It's coming, and we have to do something about it.

The fact is any change in health care that isn't simply about spending more money tends to be pretty unpopular. We've got to think about that. All of us have got to think about that, and all of us have got to work to try and solve the problem.

Here in B.C. some are suggesting that only adding — listen to this number — \$4.6 billion to the health budget over the next three years is a cut, \$4.6 billion over the next three years.

Think of what you could do in your communities. How would you like that, Robert: \$4.6 billion?

That's the challenge that we face, and we're going to have to bring together all of our minds and all of our smartest people to say: how do we meet that challenge and how do we confront it in a way that's constructive and positive and that protects what is a great health care system?

You know, if you think about this, right now in British Columbia we spend the second least per-capita amount in capital on health services, per capita in Canada. Now, some people say that's a bad thing, but think of what it means. It means that we are better utilizing our health care dollars.

Here's the other things we should remember. We have been, and the Conference Board of Canada has said that our health system in B.C. is the best in the country. If B.C. was just a country by itself, we would have the highest life expectancy in the world for men, and our women would have amongst the life expectancies in the world. That's a health care system that's working for all of us. We have easily the best cancer care and cardiac care outcomes in Canada: we should be proud of that. Our health service deliverers should be proud of it, and our caregivers should be proud of it.

We need to celebrate our successes as we confront our challenges. Where health services can be provided more cost effectively through new funding formulas or innovations in health delivery we're going to have to pursue those options if we want to be able to look our children in the eye and say you will have the health services that we benefited from when you need them. Every one of us has a responsibility to be able to say that to the next generation of British Columbians. We're going to work hard, and we're going to work together, and we're going to make those tough decisions so we can do just that to my children, my grandchildren and your children and your grandchildren. That is what they deserve.

If we don't deal with this, health spending is going to squeeze out every other spending priority that we may have in government. That's what the HST is all about. Every leading economist in the country has said that it's the single most important thing we can do to encourage investment and to move our economy forward. It will lower costs of production by almost \$2 billion annually and put our companies on an equal footing with six other provinces and 129 other countries who don't have any sales tax on business inputs. That will create new investment and new jobs.

It will lower costs in the construction industry by \$880 million, in transportation by \$210 million, \$140 million in manufacturing, \$140 million in forestry, \$80 million in mining and oil and gas. It will make businesses more competitive. They will be ready to invest. They will increase productivity. It will increase wages, and it creates jobs.

This is about building a strong economy and jobs for British Columbians so they know they have confidence in their future in this province.

It will save businesses \$150 million in compliance costs across the province, and that will mean more investment. It will save the government \$30 million a year in administrative costs as we move to one level of administrative, as opposed to two.

Let me be clear. As we said in the budget, we will rebate the incremental new cost of HST so that, on the average, local governments will pay no additional sales tax following harmonization. We're going to work with you, and we're going to do it.

Our HST will be the lowest in Canada. That will be combined with the lowest personal income tax rates for anyone who's making a wage up to \$118,000 a year, the lowest corporate tax rates and the lowest small business tax rates. We have one of the most competitive tax regimes in the country, and in spite of what the leader of the opposition may think, I can tell you this: when you've got a competitive tax regime, you've got investment, you've got jobs, and you've got prosperity, and that's where we're going to in British Columbia as we work together.

That's why last week we joined with our local government and our federal government partners to announce the largest single community infrastructure project in the history of British Columbia — \$718 million for 174 new infrastructure projects; 4,600 jobs that will be on the ground in no time. Last October I said that we would accelerate capital projects to help create jobs. We accelerated Local Motion and Towns for Tomorrow investments. We pushed hard for the stimulus-funding program in the spring. In fact, since last October we have launched 650 accelerated projects valued at more than \$4 billion in the province of British Columbia.

With the other capital projects that we have, we expect that they will create about 26,000 construction jobs in every corner of our province, and we're not done yet. I want you all to understand this. Not one federal dollar will be left on the table as we move to maximize the opportunities for B.C.'s workers and B.C.'s communities. We're going to continue to work with the UBCM and the federal government. In the next couple of weeks you'll hear about additional new funding for a total of \$1 billion-plus of investments in infrastructure and opportunities in every region of British Columbia.

Just think of what we have been able to do because of the partnerships that we have built in community after community in the province and the federal government. Most of it has been partnerships with you and the provincial government. I came to this convention, and I said at one point we were going to open a new Park Bridge through the Kicking Horse Canyon, a new Sea to Sky highway, a new William R. Bennett Bridge in Kelowna. Every one of those projects is complete, and they're making life better in British Columbia.

I said to you we'd build the Cariboo Connector, the new Port Mann Bridge, the South Fraser Perimeter Road, the Pitt River Bridge, the Simon Fraser Bridge. Every one of those projects is underway.

I said we would build new ferries and expand our ferry terminals, that we would expand our airports in Cranbrook, in Terrace, Kitimat, in Prince George and Victoria, in Nanaimo and Comox. Most are now complete. I said we would get a new container facility in Prince Rupert, a new Canada Line and a new convention centre right here in Vancouver. They are now complete.

Together we have invested in the most massive expansion of health care infrastructure that we've had in the province of British Columbia: a new hospital and cancer centre in Abbotsford, new hospital towers in Kelowna and Vernon, a new Cranbrook regional hospital, a new Northern Cancer Centre in Prince George, brand-new hospitals in Fort St. John, Victoria, Surrey and Vancouver. The list goes on. And we've done it all in partnership, and it's going to make life better for every British Columbian in every part of this province, and it's because of the work that you've all done.

We've got seven new universities. We've expanded the number of student spaces by 36,000. There are new medical schools in Prince George and Victoria and Kelowna. We did it all working together, finding answers and getting on with things — finding answers, searching for answers, finding them and acting on them. That's the power of partnerships to build a strong economy.

Our green growth development plan reduces greenhouse gas emissions, creates jobs in the woods, new jobs in First Nations communities, new jobs in technology, manufacturing and more. It's all about stimulating investment, innovation, economic opportunity that is environmentally sustainable. The plan will drive new jobs in forestry and construction as we act to build greener communities and more affordable housing.

The Wood First Act requires the use of wood as the primary building material in all new provincially funded buildings. When we welcome the world in February, we're going to show just how spectacular wood is as a building material, because in British Columbia we all know wood is good.

When the international community goes to the Richmond Speed Skating Oval and they're looking for something to put their cameras on when there's not an event going on, they're going to go up to that roof: one million board feet, one million beautiful board feet, of pine beetle-enhanced wood that they can see, that we can market and that we can sell.

When the international broadcasting community, the international broadcasting centre, opens up in the new convention centre next door, they will see wood. They will see hemlock. They will see fir. They will see an exceptional building and an exceptional place because we all know in British Columbia that wood is good. That's the opportunity that's in front of us, and it's the opportunity that comes from vision and leadership and commitment to one another.

You know, for all the challenges that we face today, we're living in this incredibly exciting time in British Columbia. In 132 days we play host to the world and the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games.

It's amazing to me to think of how long it's been since we started to deal with the Olympics. I first talked to the UBCM convention about it in 2002 at Whistler. You know, this is a convention about champions, and I think everyone's been a champion as we got prepared for this Olympic Games.

It is the single most important marketing opportunity we have. Think of the stories we can tell already about British Columbia. This is the first Olympics in history where the world will be welcomed by the country, by the province, by the cities, but also for the first time ever by four host First Nations: the Squamish, the Tsleil-Waututh, the Musqueam and the Lil'wat. This is an event that embraces all of us. It's an event that embraces all of us as Canadians.

In 28 days the torch will land in our capital, the land in Victoria, British Columbia and start the longest ever in-country journey the Olympic flame has gone, touching all of our provinces. In British Columbia

alone it's 266 communities.

This is a convention about champions. As that torch goes through your community, it will light the fire of championship in someone that you've never met. You may never see it happen, but that torch will light the fire.

Because of all of you working with us, because of premiers across Canada working with us, I think we're going to have an exceptional time in 2010.

How smart can you get really? We actually didn't know there was going to be a major recession, but what better way to launch the recovery than having the Olympics in 2010.

Champions are always about teams. And today I want to talk about the leader of that team: Jack Poole. There is no one who has more to build the Vancouver-Canada Olympic team than Jack Poole. He's served as the chair of their board for VANOC from 2001-2003 as we sought the bid, and then he took over as they developed the Games' organizing committee. You know, Jack Poole has been an exceptional citizen not just in Vancouver but in British Columbia and Canada, and he's been an incredible ambassador for the Olympic movement.

So I'm pleased to tell you today that the beautiful plaza that is made right next door to the Convention Centre, across the way, at the foot of Thurlow Street, will be called Jack Poole Plaza to recognize the incredible contribution that Mr. Poole has made.

For all the work and all the time, the years and years and years we've spent on this, now is the time. Now is the time to make sure that you're ready to host the world. Three billion viewers will be watching; 250,000 visitors will be coming. As that Olympic torch comes through our province and into BC Place Stadium the world will be watching us. And then for almost a month their eyes will be on us.

We'll have the opportunity not just to show off British Columbia and Canada and all that we are and all that we hope to be and all that we strive to be – we'll have a chance to show off each of your communities. We'll introduce ourselves to the world. We'll introduce ourselves and your communities to Canada. British Columbia will become known like we've never been known before.

You know, we will get to be known for all of our diversity and all of our strengths, from Port Hardy to Port Moody, from Prince George to Prince Rupert, from Fort Nelson to Fort Langley, and the Okanagan, the Peace, the Kootenays, the Cariboo Chilcotin, the magnificent Skeena region. All over British Columbia we will have the world's eyes upon us.

We'll celebrate as Canadian athletes reach for their peak performances, reach to be the best they can be. And as the Canadian athletes stand on that podium and receive their gold metal, we will all have pride in our hearts as we sing 'O Canada', either quietly or loudly with them, together.

It will be your Olympics. It will be our Olympics. It will be our chance to show the world our pride in our province, in our country and our confidence in where we can go and what we can do.

Champions work hard. They push through the tough stuff, and they come out winners. That's what B.C. will do too. We have done great things before; we will do great things together again.

Thank you all very much. Thank you for all that you do. Thank you.