



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 13, 2009

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORTS ON BUDGET 2010 CONSULTATIONS

VICTORIA – After reviewing the budget priorities of more than 3,400 British Columbians, the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services has released its report on the Budget 2010 consultations. The report contains a total of 49 recommendations, reflecting the diversity of subjects brought to the Committee’s attention.

“Health care remains one of the public’s top priorities,” said committee chair John Les, MLA. “The report contains 12 recommendations on this topic – ranging from increasing the use of nurse practitioners and multi-disciplinary teams, to providing additional support for palliative care, as well as for healthy-living initiatives.”

Other budget priority areas identified by the public include both K-12 and post-secondary education, funding for the arts, sports and early intervention services for children with special needs.

The report contains eight recommendations on implementation mitigation strategies for the HST; measures to bolster B.C’s agriculture, mining and forestry sectors; as well as suggestions for government action on the property transfer tax, property tax assessments and deficit control.

“During our consultations, the Committee heard several suggestions on how to ease the transition to the HST,” remarked Les. “The report not only includes recommendations on PST audits, input tax credits and transition rules, but also mitigation measures for the tourism and residential home construction sectors.”

Opposition Members did not endorse the report. “The Committee reached a consensus on many of the report’s recommendations. However, there are several issues – particularly recommendations relating to the HST – which we could not support,” said deputy committee chair Doug Donaldson, MLA.

Copies of the Committee’s report are available on-line at leg.bc.ca/budgetconsultations.

-30-

The members of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services are:

John Les, MLA (Chilliwack), Chair	Bruce Ralston, MLA (Surrey-Whalley)
Doug Donaldson, MLA (Stikine), Deputy Chair	Bill Routley, MLA (Cowichan Valley)
Norm Letnick, MLA (Kelowna-Lake Country)	John Rustad, MLA (Nechako Lakes)
Don McRae, MLA (Comox Valley)	Jane Thornthwaite, MLA (North Vancouver-Seymour)
Michelle Mungall, MLA (Nelson-Creston)	John van Dongen, MLA (Abbotsford South)

For further information:

Kate Ryan-Lloyd, Clerk to the Committee
Room 224, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B.C., V8V 1X4

Telephone: 250 356-2933 (collect)

Toll-free: 1-877-428-8337

Fax: 250 356-8172

E-mail: FinanceCommittee@leg.bc.ca