

File: 0390-20 AVICC

January 21, 2020

Chair and Directors
Comox Valley Regional District Board

Dear Chair and Directors:

Re: AVICC Resolution - Farm Tax Harmonization to Encourage Production on Farmland

As an advocate for local food security I am writing to request the board’s consideration of forwarding a resolution to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) 2020 AGM and Convention requesting that the Provincial Government work with BC Assessment to enact property tax updates to encourage greater production on farmland.

In general terms, the changes being proposed seek to harmonize farm taxes with a single base threshold and provide new entrants with a transition period while continuing the special considerations respecting retired farmers. I believe such changes will support the relocalization of our food system, reduce our carbon footprint and increase resiliency in local communities.

As background, I am providing links to the following two reports that support these changes:

ALR Revitalization Final Report:

<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc/impact/agricultural-land-reserve-results/>

Kwantlen Polytechnic White Paper on ALR:

https://www.kpu.ca/sites/default/files/Protection%20is%20not%20enough_full%20white%20paper_IS_FS_March%2012%202018.pdf

As the deadline for submissions to the AVICC Convention is Thursday, February 6, 2020, I am respectfully requesting the board’s immediate consideration of this request. If the deadline is missed the resolution will be considered a “Late Resolution” which are not included in the resolutions package and requires a special motion at the convention to admit for debate.

As the Electoral Area Director for Electoral Area ‘B’, I respectfully request your consideration of the following:

“THAT the following resolution be forwarded to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities 2020 AGM and Convention for consideration:

WHEREAS the re-localization of our food system is necessary to reduce our carbon footprint and increase resiliency in local communities;

AND WHEREAS the threshold to maintain farm class status for properties between two (2) and ten (10) acres is \$2500 has not changed since 1993, making British Columbia one of the lowest thresholds in Canada;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia work with BC Assessment to establish a minimum \$7,000 threshold for farms of all sizes to be phased in over three years for new participants and to implement a program of continued farm status for retired farmers.

Sincerely,

Arzeena Hamir
Director