

December 10, 2025

File No. 0530-01

Hon. Christine Boyle
Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Via email: hma.minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Boyle:

Re: Bill M216 – *Professional Reliance Act*

On behalf of City of Williams Lake Council, I am writing to express our concerns and opposition to Bill M216, the *Professional Reliance Act*. While we acknowledge the Province's commitment to addressing housing supply challenges and streamlining approvals, this legislation represents a significant overreach into municipal jurisdiction and is likely to create unnecessary risks related to both human and environmental health and safety.

It appears to us that Bill M216 would undermine local government decision-making authority and oversight over development projects, bypassing the professional expertise of municipal planners, engineers, and building officials, whose knowledge of local context is essential for responsible and sustainable development.

Protection of Local Knowledge

The City of Williams Lake, like many local governments, has been diligently striving to improve and streamline development approval processes in alignment with local and provincial housing goals, while also ensuring the long-term tenets of public safety and economic and environmental sustainability are protected. Members of the development review staff, regulated by their respective professional bodies, work closely and collaboratively with developers to ensure the above goals are met, and yet frequently find themselves reviewing plans and drawings created by individuals that are unfamiliar with local, regional, or even provincial context. City staff often note omissions and concerns with designs that would have a significant local impact if implemented - for instance related to unique geotechnical or transportation conditions - but would go unnoticed and unaddressed by those unfamiliar with such dynamics. Often developers' professionals face pressure to prioritize budget and schedule constraints over the need to build safer and more sustainable neighbourhoods that reflect community needs and protect the environment over the long-term.

The Opposite Effect – Increased Delays

It is ultimately inevitable that a local government will face a situation where concerns about the quality, accuracy, or assumptions of a professional cannot be left unaddressed in good conscience. Often resolved quickly via open dialogue and comments from staff, Bill M216 will force a new practice of referring the matter to the provincial Superintendent of Professional

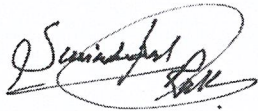


Governance for formal dispute resolution. This office focuses on professional regulation, not deliberation on the unique technical aspects of professional work in settings across the province. As such, requiring the Superintendent to resolve potential disputes from multiple municipalities, each with the potential for many annual developments, will almost certainly lead to increased inefficiencies and processing delays, exacerbating the very issue Bill M216 seeks to address.

In short, British Columbians that live, play, and raise families in local communities expect decisions regarding their safety and health to be made by those with local accountability and vested, personal interest in their neighbours – not delegated to remote consultants or developers that are motivated primarily by financial gain.

Although the City of Williams Lake recognizes the need for increased housing and supports efforts to accelerate delivery, we urge the Province to pause Bill M216 and engage in meaningful consultation with local governments and professional organizations before proceeding. Respecting municipal authority and democratic processes is critical to achieving housing goals while safeguarding public trust.

Yours truly,



Mayor Surinderpal Rathor

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