

Dear Ms Tuzi, Mr Sangha, and Mr Michael Crawford

I am responding to your letter dated March 29, 2017 to the Honorable Christy Clark, concerning the observations of the Multicultural and Antiracism Committee of the BC Association of Social Workers, related to racism in British Columbia dated March 29, 2017.

The observations of your Multicultural and Antiracism Committee are very helpful and its reassuring to know that many individuals, professionals and organizations are opposed to hate and racism in BC, because only together can we ensure our communities remain safe and welcoming to all British Columbians.

The BC Government continues to take an active stance on hate and racism with its support for the BC Hate Crime Team and its support for the Organizing Against Racism and Hate network (OARH), which currently has 32 active communities across BC.

We also continue to provide support to communities to celebrate their cultural diversity and challenge racism.

In November 2016, all B.C. OARH communities were awarded over \$217,000 in provincial funding aimed at supporting their efforts to challenge racism and celebrate diversity. Specifically those activities developed using a collaborative, community-based focus for outreach, educational opportunities, workshops and anti-racism events. One example being the Cowichan Intercultural Society-led program that trains youth ambassadors to provide anti-racism lessons for Cowichan Valley elementary school students with a focus on welcoming Syrian refugees.

In March 2017, one hundred and twenty community organizations from around the province received a total of \$300,000 in multiculturalism grants to help celebrate British Columbia's rich multicultural heritage and promote diversity and inclusiveness. One example of the projects supported was a travelling exhibition to illustrate the struggles and accomplishments of Chinese Canadian women in Canada.

No incident of racism in BC is taken lightly by the government and we liaise with both the BC Hate Crimes Team, local police and OARH members to better understand the situation and therefore make an appropriate response.

Your four recommendations have been taken into account and we will continue to monitor the situation in BC and Canada and respond appropriately.

Thank you for helpful comments

Yours faithfully

Mark Seeley
Director – Multiculturalism