

May 13, 2022

Honourable David Eby Q.C.
Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing
Honourable Mike Farnworth
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
Honourable Shiela Malcolmson
Minister for Mental Health and Addiction's

Dear Minister Eby, Minister Malcolmson, and Minister Farnworth

We are writing in support of the letters written by the BC Union of Municipal Mayors about the need for Complex Care Housing through out BC, also the BCUMC letter regarding concerns about prolific offenders who continue, through catch and release, to re-offend.

We have compassion and we do care that some people in our communities have complex care needs because of mental health and problematic substance use. We strongly feel people with complex health problems need supports which are just not available in many places in the BC Interior. In the Okanagan there are few affordable or publicly funded residences available for people who specifically need addiction rehabilitation and long term recovery housing, let alone for those who need added supports for mental health. We believe there is a strong need for housing that is specific to people with complex care needs where they can receive in-house support. If the model used has no in-house addiction and mental health supports then housing should be placed close to hospitals or health units where the residents can readily and easily access the care they need. So they don't have to travel half way across the city on public transit to find help. Unlike bigger cities, (Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto) smaller cities do not have an abundance of mental health or addiction treatment places. We also believe that if "scattered complex care housing" is the model the Province decides to use, they should be placed in all of the neighbourhood sectors of a city, not concentrated in a few specific neighbourhoods "where property might be cheaper".

Regarding prolific offenders we applaud the Municipal mayors and Province for acknowledging that there is a growing concern about this. We agree with Mr. Eby when he said, "*Simply because we are compassionate, concerned, and taking action on mental health and addiction issues does not mean that we have to accept criminal behaviour, vandalism, or violence in our communities.*"

Daily the residents in our neighbourhoods see those who they have reported for vandalism, theft, harassment, and even assault, who are not pursued, are not caught, or if charged are back out in the same neighbourhood within hours, often doing the same thing. We do not blame the police we know they have limited resources. It feels like some illegal activities are being normalized with no accountability and that the prolific offenders know this.

We hope that the Municipal Mayor's letters regarding the need for complex care housing, and BC Provincial investigations into prolific offenders are not just political posturing before this year's Municipal Election. We hope these actions will truly provide solutions to the need for complex care housing and also to the need for accountability by prolific offenders for their illegal conduct.

Sincerely,
Rutland Residents Association
Development and Safety Concerns Committee Chair

Ms Lynn Jack / Acting President

cc: Interior Health, Kelowna City Council