

April 7, 2021

John Horgan
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Adrian Dix
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Dr. Bonnie Henry
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Re: Cinemas and Performing Arts Venues

Premier Horgan, Minister Dix, Minister Mark, Dr. Henry, MLA Sandhu

The Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce is urging provincial authorities to work cooperatively with the cinema and performing arts venue sector on a strategy that will allow operations to resume in a safe manner.

Presently, movie theatres and professional performing arts venues remain shuttered and we are not aware of a specific timeline as to when that situation may evolve. With every day that goes by, these organizations move a step closer to not being viable and closing permanently. We would like to point out that if that occurs, our communities lose. Access to culture is gone as is the inspiration for younger generations and the significant employment culture creates across B.C. Culture has also provided a significant outlet for those struggling with Covid mental health issues.

At the same time that movie theatres and performance venues are idle, grocery stores, art galleries, fitness centres, bars and restaurants are open under provincial health orders. According to the Movie Theatre Association of Canada, there have been no reported cases of transmission or outbreaks associated to cinemas that have remained open in other provinces. And we have complete confidence that the operators of cinemas and professional performing arts venues will take every step possible to ensure the health and safety of their staff and patrons.

In conclusion, the Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce is asking provincial authorities to engage with cinemas and performing arts venues and establish a process that allows the designation of cinemas and professional performing arts venues to evolve from events to business within provincial health orders.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Krystin Kempton, President
Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce

CC. Shirley Bond, Official Opposition Interim Leader
Victor Cumming, City of Vernon Mayor
Kevin Acton, Regional District of North Okanagan Chair
Jim Garlick, District of Coldstream Mayor
Christine Fraser, Township of Spallumcheen Mayor
Armstrong Spallumcheen Chamber of Commerce
Caravan Farm Theatre
Okanagan Screen Arts Society
Vernon & District Performing Arts Centre
Okanagan-Shuswap Chambers of Commerce