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Nov. 30, 2021

Greater Vernon Chamber responds to new capacity limits

VERNON – The Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce welcomes the elimination of capacity limits as this will create certainty for businesses in the North Okanagan.

On Nov. 30, the provincial government announced that 50 per cent capacity limits will be lifted for indoor sports events and theatres across the Interior as of Dec. 1, bringing these private and non-profit enterprises in line with other regions in B.C.

“We thank the provincial government, the provincial health officer and Interior Health for this decision as the removal of capacity limits will create a level playing field between all businesses no matter where they are located in B.C. and it will allow them to focus on rebuilding their operations,” said Dan Proulx, Greater Vernon Chamber general manager.

The Chamber had previously expressed concerns about capacity limits including in a Nov. 25, 2021 letter to Health Minister Adrian Dix, Vernon-Monashee MLA Harwinder Sandhu and Susan Brown, Interior Health CEO.

“While the 50 per cent capacity limits have been removed, it is still frustrating that there was no clarity provided by Interior Health to businesses or public as to why capacity limits were originally restricted in our health region beyond Oct. 24 when event attendees were required to show double vaccination,” said Proulx.

The Chamber had also asked the City of Vernon, District of Coldstream and Regional District of North Okanagan to urge the provincial government to lift capacity limits and local municipal leaders are still encouraged to speak out on behalf of businesses and residents.

“Capacity limits could be enforced again by the Ministry of Health and Interior Health and a clear process needs to be established that has firm targets based on Covid cases and vaccination rates as well as meaningful and transparent communication with all stakeholders,” said Proulx.

“We also need to remember that businesses have been extremely proactive when it comes to ensuring the health and safety of their customers and employees, and they are committed to helping move B.C. out of this pandemic.”

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