

October 27, 2017

The Honorable John Horgan Premier of British Columbia
premier@gov.bc.ca

The Honourable Lisa Beare Minister of Tourism, Arts & Culture
lisa.beare.MLA@leg.bc.ca

The Honourable Jordan Sturdy MLA West Vancouver – Sea to Sky
jordan.sturdy.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Dear Premier Horgan, Minister Beare and MLA Sturdy,

The Whistler Chamber of Commerce is the voice of business in Whistler. It has come to our attention that the provincial government is considering a date change to the BC Family Day holiday. On behalf of the Whistler Chamber of Commerce and our 731 business members, we wish to request greater consultation with the provincial government before a change of date is considered.

According to the BC Chamber of Commerce Collective Perspective Survey, 52% of business respondents listed Tourism as the most important sector for BC's economy in the next 5-10 years. The current timing of the BC Family Day holiday has avoided an overlap with the holiday in other provinces, as well as, the US President's Day weekend. Thus, providing the BC ski & tourism industries with an opportunity to generate strong revenues on back-to-back weekends. Thriving weekends like these allow Whistler to drive almost a quarter of the tourism export revenue for the province and generate 500 million dollars in annual tax revenue for the federal, provincial and municipal governments (\$1.4 million daily).

Moving BC Family Day to the 3rd Monday of February would cause Whistler to experience an unnecessary over-capacity on a weekend that is already traditionally "sold out". In addition to the significant economic impact, the potential for negative guest experiences will surely increase. The current timing provides British Columbians, and out of province guests, with better quality family day experiences. It is also worth noting, the BC Ski Industry has successfully promoted BC Family Days by offering BC Residents deep discounts on lift tickets. BC Residents are able to enjoy ski resorts throughout their province on the 2nd Monday in February without the higher rates and sold out venues.

It is the opinion of the Whistler Chamber of Commerce that maintaining the current BC Family Day holiday timing would be in the best economic interest of British Columbia and social interest for families in the province. As such, we request that changes not be considered unless adequate data can be gathered to measure the potential economic impact of a proposed change on the industry, tourism sectors and family experience.

We appreciate your time and very much look forward to collaborating towards a positive outcome and continue offering an amazing holiday weekend for our BC families!

Sincerely,



Melissa Pace, Chief Executive Officer
Whistler Chamber of Commerce

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Cc: Whistler Chamber Board of Directors
Whistler Blackcomb
Tourism Whistler
Resort Municipality of Whistler
Tourism Industry Association of BC
Canada West Ski Areas Association
BC Chamber of Commerce