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SALT SPRING ISLAND, BC  
V8K 2G7

19 JANUARY 2026

ISLANDS TRUST COUNCIL  
4 - 121 McPHERSON AVENUE  
SALT SPRING ISLAND, BC

DEAR ISLANDS TRUST COUNCIL,

RE: THE DRAFT TRUST POLICY STATEMENT

THE ISLANDS TRUST WAS ESTABLISHED BY PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE UNIQUE AMENITIES AND ENVIRONMENT OF THE TRUST AREA. THIS HAS LONG BEEN UNDERSTOOD TO MEAN THE PROTECTION OF THE UNIQUE RURAL CHARACTER AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF OUR ISLANDS. IT IS MY BELIEF THAT THE REVISED TRUST POLICY STATEMENT IS A CYNICAL ATTEMPT TO UNDERMINE THIS CONSENSUS BY A RE-INTERPRETATION OF THE PREVIOUSLY UNDERSTOOD TERMS "UNIQUE AMENITIES" AND "ENVIRONMENT".

A 1986 POSITION PAPER ENDORSED BY BOTH TRUST COUNCIL AND THE THEN MINISTER OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS DEFINED UNIQUE AMENITIES AS NATURAL AND CULTURAL FEATURES (ie, "heritage and archaeological" sites, "SCENIC BEAUTY", "TRANQUIL RURAL AREAS") BUT NOT THE PROVISION OF HUMAN SERVICES (ie, HOUSING, LIVELIHOODS, INFRASTRUCTURE, TOURISM - NONE OF WHICH ARE UNIQUE).

IN 2025 THE MINISTER OF HOUSING AND MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS RAVI KAHLOON RESPONDING TO A REQUEST FROM ISLANDS TRUST COUNCIL FOR A GOVERNANCE REVIEW HIGHLIGHTED THE TRUST'S ENVIRONMENTAL MISSION. HE WROTE THAT LAND USE PLANNING TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE TRUST AREA "MUST REFLECT THE ECOLOGICAL MANDATE OF THE TRUST ... THAT TRUST COUNCIL RECOGNIZES THAT THIS REQUIRES CAREFUL DELIBERATION AND CONSIDERATION OF PERSPECTIVES TO MANAGE EXPECTATION OF GROWTH; DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL ECONOMIES WITHOUT EXCEEDING THE CARRYING CAPACITY OF LOCAL ECOSYSTEMS AND PRESERVING UNSPOILED NATURAL AMENITIES." (NOTE THE USE OF THE WORD "NATURAL").

I AM IN TOTAL AGREEMENT WITH THE WORDS OF OUR MLA BOB BOTTERELL THAT "THE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF THE LANDS AND WATERS OF THE TRUST AREA IS, AND MUST ALWAYS BE, PARAMOUNT." UNEQUIVICAL WORDING TO THAT EFFECT MUST BE PART OF ANY REVISED TRUST POLICY STATEMENT. IN THE LAST REFERENDUM HELD IN 2017, ISLANDERS DECISIVELY TURNED DOWN MUNICIPAL INCORPORATION DUE TO FEARS THAT THIS TYPE OF GOVERNANCE WOULD END THE PROTECTIONS OF THE TRUST MANDATE IN FAVOUR OF RAMPANT DEVELOPMENT. THE REVISED TRUST POLICY STATEMENT IGNORES THE RESULT OF THAT REFERENDUM AND IS DESIGNED TO DISMANTLE THE ISLANDS TRUST BY OTHER MEANS. AGAIN, QUOTING MLA BOTTERELL: "DEVELOPMENT AND POPULATION GROWTH IN THE ISLANDS TRUST AREA IS NOT INEVITABLE, ITS A CHOICE." MY CHOICE IS TO FORSAKE THE DRAFT TRUST POLICY STATEMENT AND REVERT TO THE EXISTING ONE. IT IS OUR DUTY TO PROTECT OUR ISLANDS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

YOURS VERY TRULY,



LAURENCE APPLEBY

cc HONOURABLE CHRISTINE BOYLE  
MINISTER OF HOUSING AND MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS