



BC FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PRIVACY ASSOCIATION

MEDIA RELEASE

BC government claims it has no records related to Carney speech about Vancouver real estate market

FIPA asks Information Commissioner to investigate

VANCOUVER, January 19, 2017 – In an astounding response to a Freedom of Information request by the BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association (FIPA), the BC government claims it has no documents whatsoever related to a major speech in 2011 at the Vancouver Board of Trade by then-Bank of Canada head Mark Carney.

The [speech](#) dealt with Vancouver real estate and foreign investors. At one point Carney stated that Asian investors seeking diversification and hard assets have “become a familiar phenomenon in this city.” He went on to describe the Vancouver market as “...taking on characteristics of financial asset markets.”

FIPA’s request to the BC Ministry of Finance was for:

Copies of all correspondence including but not limited to emails, phone records, BBM messages etc. as well as all briefing notes, analysis and background documents prepared by or forwarded to the Ministry related to a speech given by then Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney to the Vancouver Board of Trade in June 2011 regarding the housing market in Canada.

“It is incredible that the BC Ministry of Finance has not a single word about a widely reported speech where the head of the Bank of Canada actually comes to BC and talks about foreign investment, affordability and the real estate market,” said FIPA Executive Director Vincent Gogolek. “Not an e mail, not a phone message, no communications lines, nothing on a major speech about a controversial topic right here in Vancouver.”

Of course this is [not the first time](#) that a FOI request to the BC government has come up with nothing where it would be reasonable to expect extensive documentation.

In the wake of the triple delete scandal and recommendations from the BC Information and Privacy Commissioner, FIPA and many others, a Special Legislative Committee [recommended](#) the creation of a legislative “**duty to document**” to ensure that government records are created and maintained. The BC government has so far failed to bring in any of the Committee’s recommendations.

An [Ipsos poll](#) commissioned by FIPA last year showed that 78% of British Columbians believe it is very important that government implement a duty to document.

“We have filed a complaint with the Commissioner about the search for records in this case,” said Gogolek, “but whatever the result this case highlights the need for a legal duty to document government actions.”

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