



By email: [Premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Premier@gov.bc.ca), [CITZ.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CITZ.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

October 26, 2021

The Honourable John Horgan M.L.A.  
Premier of British Columbia  
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt  
PROV GOVT VICTORIA, BC V8W 9E1

The Honourable Lisa Beare M.L.A.  
Minister of Citizens' Services  
PO Box 9068 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Dear Premier and Minister,

**Subject: Bill 22 amendments to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA).**

We, the undersigned, believe **transparency matters** and, because of this, we write to you to express our grave concerns about the Bill 22 amendments to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA).

Bill 22 would see substantive changes made to FIPPA for the first time in over a decade. Unfortunately, if passed, this Bill will undermine access to information and make public bodies less transparent. It is a step backwards for openness and accountability, and a missed opportunity to protect the privacy and improve the information rights of British Columbians.

This legislation would extend the ability of current and future governments to keep people in the dark about vital matters of public interest. Its introduction at this time short-circuits the work of the special legislative committee responsible for reviewing FIPPA, preventing meaningful public consultation. If passed, it would immediately put up more barriers for people seeking access to information.

You have made prior commitments regarding the value you place on transparency and about the need to improve government accountability, but this legislation would make it harder for everyone - concerned citizens, experienced researchers, and you - to get facts rather than spin.

We recognize this majority government can readily pass this regressive Bill quickly. If that happens, it will impact the citizens of British Columbia now, haunt us into the future, and set a dangerous precedent across Canada.

Our message is simple: **Transparency matters to all of us. Stop Bill 22.**

We call on the government to:

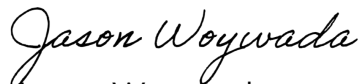
- Withdraw this Bill
- Recognize the role of the all-party special committee and allow it to complete its work, including an open consultation process
- Commit, on record, to introduce comprehensive amendments to FIPPA that reflect the recommendations of past and current special committees

As interested individuals and members of organizations, we call on you to demonstrate your commitment to democratic values by taking action to improve-not reduce-the transparency of public bodies.

Signed by:



Mike Larsen  
President



Jason Woywada  
Executive Director

BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association  
With support from our partners as attached.

CC:

[BCLiberalCaucus@leg.bc.ca](mailto:BCLiberalCaucus@leg.bc.ca)  
[greencaucus@leg.bc.ca](mailto:greencaucus@leg.bc.ca)

An online version of this letter is [here](#) and is continuing to gain support.

This call to action is supported by the following organizations:

- [The British Columbia Civil Liberties Association \(BCCLA\)](#)
- [The British Columbia General Employees' Union \(BCGEU\)](#)
- [The Canadian Association of Journalists](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives BC Office \(CCPA-BC\)](#)
- [Canadian Institute for Information and Privacy Studies \(CIIPS\)](#)
- [Centre for Access to Information and Justice \(CAIJ\)](#)
- [The Centre for Law and Democracy \(CLD\)](#)
- [Democracy Watch](#)
- [Fairley Strategies](#)
- [Forest Protection Allies FORPA](#)
- [Independent Contractors and Businesses Association](#)
- [Lawyers Rights Watch Canada](#)
- [Open Media](#)
- [Privacy & Access Council of Canada \(PACC - CCAP\)](#)
- [Public Interest Advocacy Centre \(PIAC\)](#)
- [Student Press Freedom Act Campaign \(SPFA Campaign\)](#)
- [The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs \(UBCIC\)](#)
- [West Coast Legal Education and Action Fund \(West Coast LEAF\)](#)
- [The Wilderness Committee](#)

This call to action is supported by the following individuals:

- Jason Austin
- John Brady
- Lynn Copeland
- Carla Graebner, Librarian for Research Data Services and Government Information, W.A.C. Bennett Library, Simon Fraser University
- Sean Holman, Wayne Crookes Professor in Environmental and Climate Journalism, University of Victoria
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- Victoria Lemieux, Associate Professor, Archival Science, School of Information, Co-Lead, Blockchain@UBC research cluster, Distinguished Scholar, Sauder School of Business, Faculty Associate, Institute for Computing, Information and Cognitive Systems, The University of British Columbia
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- Marcus Ooms
- Dawe Pope
- Ken Rubin, Investigative researcher and transparency advocate
- Dan Schubart
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