



Press Release

NORTHEAST BC COALITION MEETS WITH MINISTERS IN OTTAWA

April 19, 2016
For Immediate Release

Mayors from Northeast BC are in Ottawa to press the Federal Government for expedited approval of the Petronas LNG proposal and for action on securing access to Asian and world markets for BC vast natural gas reserves.

The meetings were organized at the request of the NEBC Resource Municipalities Coalition by MP Bob Zimmer. The Coalition was represented by Fort St. John Mayor Lori Ackerman, District of Taylor Mayor Rob Fraser, Northern Rockies Regional Municipality Mayor Bill Streeper and the Coalition Executive Director Colin Griffith. Acting Mayor Charles Parslow of Dawson Creek and Tumbler Ridge Mayor Don McPherson also joined the delegation.

Mayor Bill Streeper stated, " We made certain that the Federal government Ministers and officials were aware that Northeast BC has the majority of Canada's natural gas reserves and that our communities, our citizens and our workers, with the support of regulation by the BC Oil and Gas Commission, have world class expertise in developing the natural gas resources within the highest safety and environmental standards in North America."

Mayor Rob Fraser stated, "We met today with Natural Resources Minister James Carr and senior officials from the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Infrastructure. We presented a strong unified message that our citizens and business are experiencing an economic downturn of grave severity with massive job losses and business failures which has major negative impacts on families and workers as well as our local economy."

"Our message to the Federal Government today was crystal clear," added Mayor Lori Ackerman. " Delays in environmental approval decisions for Petronas LNG and other proposed projects will risk LNG from competing countries seizing the customers ahead of Canada. We simply could miss this current market opportunity. This will be devastating to our communities"

Mayor Don McPherson added, "It was stressed during our meetings that our resource communities are on the front lines of resource development . We were pleased that Minister Carr acknowledged that getting our Natural Gas into the world market was a high priority of the Liberal Government. He stressed that they are legally required to complete the environmental review process for the Petronas project but are committed to making a timely decision in full awareness of the vast economic benefits to the country."

"Our delegation addressed the contributions that Canada's vast natural gas resource can contribute to reducing the world greenhouse gas levels," advised Acting Mayor Charles Parslow, of Dawson Creek. "We need the Federal and Provincial governments to focus on how Canada can contribute to reducing the 98% of greenhouse gas emitted by the other countries in the world, particularly Asia, by reducing the worlds reliance on coal.



Colin Griffith, Executive Director of the Coalition concluded, "We need to urge Canadians to reexamine our role in terms of Climate Action and to increase our awareness that extreme measures to limit the 2% of GHG emitted in Canada does not resolve this world wide challenge , but it will certainly cause permanent damage to Canada's resource economy and severally limit and reduce our overall quality of life."

The unemployment rate in Northeast BC is currently estimated to be much higher than the 9.7% reported by Statistics Canada as many oil and gas workers do not qualify for Employment Insurance benefits and will not be included in those calculations.

The Northeast BC Resource Municipalities Coalition mission is to protect and enhance existing resource municipalities and rural communities of Northeastern BC. Coalition supports the important role that the resource municipalities and rural communities play in supporting existing and future resource development, the resource municipalities and rural communities cannot be defined solely on the basis of their service center function but must be seen as economically diversified and socially vibrant municipalities and rural communities that will continue to develop and prosper in the long term.

Members of the Northeast BC Resource Municipalities Coalition include the City of Fort St. John, District of Taylor, Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, Chamber of Commerce in Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Fort Nelson and Chetwynd, the Northern BC Truckers Association and Energy Services BC. Senator Richard Neufeld is also an honorary member.

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Contact:

Fort St. John Mayor Lori Ackerman – 250.787.8150

Northern Rockies Regional Municipality Mayor Bill Streeper – 250.774.2541

District of Taylor Mayor Rob Fraser – 250.789.3392

Colin Griffith, Coalition Executive Director – 780.933.9054