



City of Langford

[www.cityoflangford.ca](http://www.cityoflangford.ca)

2015/05/27

Email: [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca)

Honourable Christy Clark  
Office of the Premier  
PO Box 9041 STN PROV GOVT  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

Dear Premier Clark:

**RE: Support for First Responders – Changes to the Workers Compensation Act**

I am writing to you with concerns and a solution regarding our First Responders. On March 25, 2015, I received a request and documentation from Lisa Jennings, paramedic and Founder of a grass roots movement, You are not alone, regarding the lack of a Presumptive Clause and further changes to the present WSBC Legislation.

Council reviewed the documentation, research and other letters of support from Ms. Jennings at their regular meeting of May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015, and resolved to support First Responders request for proposed changes to WorkSafe Legislation. We will also be putting forth a Resolution to the next UBCM this year (copy attached).

It is imperative that these changes as requested are supported in whole, be added to the *Workers Compensation Act* as we can no longer sit by when our First Responders are considering and acting upon suicide as an alternative due to not receiving the urgent treatment they require once sustaining a work related mental health injury. This has been confirmed in a letter by Dr. Morley, Psychologist and considered a specialist in Trauma and treating First Responders with PTSD and other mental health disorders. The evidence is in the rise in the suicides to date, six paramedics, three fire fighters and 13 Peace Officers have committed suicide since January 1<sup>st</sup> of this year, and these are the statistics that have been reported.

Langford Municipal Council affirms its support the proposed Presumptive Clause and changes to the *Workers Compensation Act*, as delay of early treatment that such tragedies occur and to honor those in service who have taken their own lives. Those who had always been at the ready to help, putting their

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own lives on hold or themselves in danger, and to take care of all of the people of British Columbia, no matter what the toll. And more importantly, to prevent any more lives lost.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Stewart Young', written in a cursive style.

Stewart Young  
Mayor

pc: Honourable Shirley Bond, [JTST.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:JTST.Minister@gov.bc.ca)  
Minister of Jobs, Training and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour

Attachment

## Union of British Columbia Municipalities

### RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS** First Responders will include 9-1-1 Operators, Paramedics, Firefighters, Peace Officers, Police Officers, Sheriffs and Corrections Officers;

**AND WHEREAS** many First Responders have been affected by a mental health injury/disorder – thus replacing “PTSD” with “Mental Health Injury”

**AND WHEREAS** there is a need to change the *Workers Compensation Act* under Section 5.1 to add a PRESUMPTIVE CLAUSE, as it is possible that within a First Responders’ duties, they will encounter horrific acts and develop a mental health injury;

**AND WHEREAS** it is imperative that a two month **maximum** deadlines be implemented when making a decisions, at any decision point of the claim regarding a Mental Health Injury claim based on one psychologist and/or one psychiatrist report;

**AND WHEREAS** upon receipt of a Mental Health Injury claim, the Worker receives immediate, financial benefits and treatment, with the understanding and agreement of the Worker, their Specialist and the WSBC, that if it is PROVEN that the injury was **not** as a result of their duties of employment, there will be a repayment plan for costs;

**AND WHEREAS;** when the Worker is “fit to return to work or retraining” there will be a follow up plan to be agreed upon by WSBC, the specialist and Worker. Under Policy 97.34, Conflict of Medical Opinion, the probable difference of opinion shall be discussed with the physicians (refer to the treating physician or specialists) involved. If it is concluded there is doubt on any issues, the Board *must* follow the mandate of s. 99 of *The Act* and resolve that issue in a manner that favors the Worker.