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November 16, 2010

Christopher Causton, President
Association of Vancouver Island and
Coastal Communities
525 Government Street
Victoria BC V8V 0A8

Reference: 187978

Dear Mayor Causton:

Re: Public Transportation Access

Thank you for your letter advising me of your association's recent resolution in support of full access to public transportation for persons with disabilities. Please accept my apologies for the lateness of this reply.

I'm proud of the work we've done in British Columbia to ensure that public transportation services under provincial jurisdiction are accessible. BC Transit, TransLink, BC Ferries and the Passenger Transportation Board have all made great strides in recent years to improve access and service levels for residents, travellers and commuters with mobility challenges.

All transit users in British Columbia now have access to low floor buses that can easily accommodate passengers travelling with wheelchairs and scooters, and design guidelines have been adopted to ensure that mobility impaired persons can be accommodated at bus stops. HandyDART, Taxi Saver and Taxi Supplement programs are also available for persons unable to use the regular bus system. For more information about the accessibility of transit services across the province, please visit the BC Transit web site at <http://www.bctransit.com>. Transit service in Metro Vancouver is provided by TransLink, and I encourage you to visit their web site at <http://www.translink.ca/en/Rider-Info/Accessible-Transit>.

British Columbia's taxpayers contribute \$20 million a year to help keep ferry rates affordable for the disabled, eligible seniors, students and those travelling for medical reasons. Where possible, BC Ferries provides mobility-impaired persons with preferred special vehicle loading, elevator service, specially equipped washrooms and preferred parking.

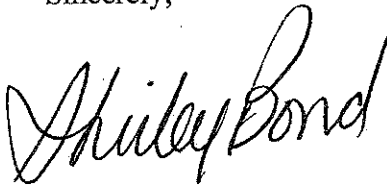
The Passenger Transportation Board, an independent tribunal, makes decisions on applications for taxis, limousines and inter-city bus licenses. The Board has established a policy to encourage the increased number and availability of accessible taxis in urban communities.

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In closing, please note that I have taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of your letter to my colleague, the Honourable Kevin Krueger, Minister of Social Development, for his review. The Ministry of Social Development has programs available to assist persons with disabilities, including a special transportation subsidy for those who have difficulties using public transportation services.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shirley Bond".

Shirley Bond
Minister

Copy to: Honourable Chuck Strahl
Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities

Honourable Kevin Krueger
Minister of Social Development
MLA, Kamloops-South Thompson