



# Bonita Zarrillo

Member of Parliament | Députée  
Port Moody—Coquitlam

March 24, 2023

Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce  
205-2773 Barnet Highway  
Coquitlam, BC  
V3B 1C2

Dear Ms. Courchesne and members of the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce,

Thank you for your letter dated February 10, 2023. I appreciate the chance to hear the concerns and ideas of businesses across Port Moody—Coquitlam, Anmore, and Belcarra, especially small businesses who are so integral to our local economy and community.

The Chamber and I share many common priorities. All of us want progress on addressing labour shortages, housing affordability and homelessness, supply chain issues, support for local businesses, and lower fees. My New Democratic colleagues and I are committed to holding the Liberal government accountable to implement programs and services in Budget 2023 that help solve these problems while spending responsibly to ensure working families and small businesses are supported.

Employment Insurance modernization is a critical concern for me and my colleagues in Parliament. EI is an important stopgap for workers who lose their jobs, and employees need support to be accessible when they need it. New Democrats are focused on making sure that workers who are entitled to EI benefits do not face obstacles in receiving payments, so they can continue to feed their families and pay their bills while they look for new opportunities. New Democrats are committed to holding the government accountable for modernizing EI and making it responsive to our changing economy.

Supply chain stability has proven to be a topic of foremost concern over the past three years, and I share the Chamber's concerns that vulnerabilities continue to go unaddressed. The effects of the pandemic demonstrate that our domestic and global supply chains are ill-equipped for crisis, and in the face of escalating crises like the climate emergency we must act to protect those critical supply chains through investment in resiliency measures and strengthening our domestic capacity. New Democrats also see this as an important factor in increasing and protecting food security across the country.

As part of the NDP's confidence and supply agreement with the Liberal government, and as the way we work evolves, the NDP have secured a commitment to prohibit the use of replacement workers in federally regulated industries and we will continue to push for that legislation's passage. The use of replacement workers represents an unfair bargaining advantage and can also put critical infrastructure and workers at risk due to lack of training. I remain keen to hear from Chamber members about the

difficulties they face with workers as a result of ongoing supply chain disruptions and how they would like to see those issues addressed.

Like so many communities across Canada, residents of Port Moody—Coquitlam, Anmore, and Belcarra are persistently concerned about the cost of housing in the region. The Chamber and I are in agreement that workforce issues go hand in hand with housing issues, and that we desperately need more affordable housing so that folks can live near where they work. My constituents consistently express the importance of building affordable housing in addition to market housing, not one or the other; measures to incentivize the construction of affordable housing, such as through community land trusts, co-ops and purpose-built rental, are of great interest. I am open to discuss solutions to alleviate housing cost pressures, reduce homelessness, and provide increased security of tenure, and I invite the Chamber to keep in touch about proposals.

Finally, I have heard from many constituents and Chamber members about their concerns regarding credit card fees. These fees are unfair for both merchants and consumers, and New Democrats have long supported imposing a 1% cap on merchant fees to bring fees closer to those seen in other OECD countries. I look forward to working alongside small businesses to get the Liberal government to finally take action and lessen the burden of credit card fees.

Once again, I appreciate you sharing the collective concerns of your members with me, and I want to thank you for the work you do representing your members and promoting our local Tri-Cities economy. Please reach out at any time with any future concerns or feedback.

Sincerely,



Bonita Zarrillo  
MP, Port Moody—Coquitlam  
Critic for Infrastructure and Communities  
Critic for Disability Inclusion  
Deputy Critic for Health