

Forest Grove Community Group Open House

Wednesday, October 2, 2019

SPEAKING NOTES

Thank you everyone for inviting me to speak with you this evening.

I would like to acknowledge that we're meeting on the traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Peoples.

I've been asked to speak directly to the issue of safety and emergency response and to share my position on the Burnaby Mountain Gondola. Those are two substantial issues, and five minutes is not a lot of time, so I'm going to stick pretty close to my script.

Fortunately I've spent a number of years working on both of these projects, and I have a habit of publishing everything that I'm working on. So I think it would be most effective to hit the main points and point to reference material for the more detailed information. I've divided my presentation into three sections:

- First, an accounting of my record on the Trans Mountain Pipeline.
- Second, To review the policy timeline for the Burnaby Mountain Tank Farm, specifically as it relates to Emergency Management and Response plans; and
- Finally, to discuss my position on the Burnaby Mountain Gondola.

My Record on the Trans Mountain Pipeline:

I think everyone here needs to understand that Burnaby Mountain is my home.

I first moved onto Burnaby Mountain in 2002 to go to SFU, I graduated there, I started my first business there, I've been on the faculty of SFU for the last 10 years, and I met my wife there 15 years ago.

Today, the home we will raise our daughter in is at the base of the mountain, with the existing pipeline running through our front yard, and the proposed expansion running through our backyard. Needless to say I'm invested in this issue, and I've spent more time on it than any other Member of Parliament in Canada over the last six years.

In fact, when it was first approved, Justin Trudeau stated:

“I’ve heard the diverse perspectives that exist in BC on this project. Indeed one of the most articulate and substantive critics is a caucus colleague, Terry Beech.”

In addition to the many townhalls that we’ve hosted ourselves, I also attended the Trans Mountain Ministerial panel hearings, NEB hearings and detailed route hearings. This included three full days of hearings here in Burnaby, of which I attended every minute. It was disappointing that not a single NDP MP showed up to listen to our community or present our concerns.

I then went on to present this Report (**Appendix 1**) to the panel in North Vancouver... and led a series of presentations and correspondence to the Prime Minister, National Caucus, and to all 338 members of parliament. I’d like to read you a brief statement from the report:

“After speaking with tens of thousands of individuals, including local, provincial and indigenous representatives, I can tell you with confidence that the people of Burnaby North-Seymour, on balance, stand opposed to this project.”

The term on balance is important. Indeed, we must acknowledge that I’ve also had hundreds of people in my office from our community also lobbying for the project to go ahead. When it came down to a vote in the house, I voted with our community, and was one of only two Liberals to do so. But it’s important to know, out of the dozens of MPs who represent ridings that the pipeline goes through, only four of us voted against it. The final result of the vote was 252 in favour and 51 opposed.

The very real and substantial concerns that the vast majority of constituents have raised in the last six years revolve around three key issues:

1. The First is Ocean’s Protection and issues around tanker traffic.
2. The second is about climate change and making sure we hit our climate targets.
3. The third is safety issues around the Burnaby Mountain Tank Farm.

If you’re interested in the first two issues, I’d highly recommend reading my Transmountain report and my Statement on the Re-Approval (**Appendix 2**). As well as my quarterly report on our Government’s work on Climate Change and the Environment (**Appendix 3**).

The Burnaby Mountain Tank Farm – Emergency Management and Response Plans:

With regards to the tank farm, on March 7th, 2019, we had a townhall with the community on Burnaby Mountain and Univercity. In addition to myself it was attended by the Mayor, representatives of the Burnaby Fire Department, MLA Chen and other community stakeholders.

In preparation for that meeting I prepared a condensed policy timeline for the Burnaby Mountain Tank Farm with a focus on Emergency Management Response Plans (**Appendix 4**). It is 250 pages, which is meatier than some would like, but it does contain, to the best of my abilities, every relevant meeting and report on Tank Farm issues from March 2011 to present day.

What is not included in that report, is my proposal to remove the tank farm from Burnaby Mountain, which was something I reiterated in my statement on reapproval when I said the following:

“Although it is still my view that the tank farm does not belong on Burnaby Mountain, I want our neighbours on the mountain to know that on June 1st, the Prime Minister and I along with Mayor Hurley and the Burnaby Fire Department met to discuss how we can make Burnaby Mountain safer than it is today. The Prime Minister assured our community that the necessary resources will be in place and that we will work directly with the Mayor and the Fire Department to ensure this is the case.”

In that meeting representatives from the Burnaby and District of North Vancouver Fire Departments, the Mayor and the Prime Minister discussed three priority items including safety issues surrounding the Burnaby Mountain Tank Farm. Discussions over what resources will be put into place if this project goes ahead are still being negotiated, and I'm not in a position to say more at this time.

I will say however, from my view, the only acceptable level of risk for an expanded tank farm is an equivalent or lesser amount than what has existed over the last 50 years, and I will continue to fight for that standard.

Finally, let me say this: in addition to my home being at the base of Burnaby Mountain, my daughter will be attending daycare at SFU. So make no mistake, I am fully invested in working with all of you to keep our Burnaby Mountain community safe. I also believe that we are all incredibly lucky to have local expertise in hydrocarbons safety like we have in Chris Bowcock, and we're also fortunate to be represented locally by an ex-firefighter in Mayor Hurley.

My Position on the Burnaby Mountain Gondola:

On July 22nd, 2019 I drafted this letter (**Appendix 5**) to Mayor and Council as they began considering how to set up appropriate public consultation on this project. While I don't have time to read it today, it thoroughly outlines my position on the project.

Closing Remarks

As I've stated, five minutes is not a lot of time but I'm happy to meet with anyone here who would like to follow up either individually or as a group.

In closing I would like to thank everyone here for the trust our community has placed in me over the last four years. I've never taken it for granted, and have worked diligently on your behalf. I've invested a lot of energy in learning to be an effective and respected parliamentarian, which was acknowledged recently when my fellow MPs vote me the Parliamentarian of the Year for Civic Engagement.

It was further reflected when the North Vancouver Firefighters endorsed my candidacy yesterday for being a strong advocate on public safety issues.

If you trust me with your vote again on October 21st, I will continue working hard for you each and every day. Thank you.



Terry Beech

Liberal Candidate for Burnaby North–Seymour

REFERENCED DOCUMENTS

You can find all these documents on TerryBeech.ca/TransMountain

1. Presentation to the Trans Mountain Ministerial Review Panel - August 19, 2016.
2. Statement on the Re-Approval of Trans Mountain - June 18, 2019.
3. Our Government's Work on Climate Change and the Environment - Revised August 2019.
4. A Condensed Policy Timeline for the Burnaby Mountain Tank Farm: Emergency Management and Response Plans - March 7, 2019.
5. Burnaby Mountain Urban Transit Gondola Project - Letter to Mayor and Council - July 22, 2019.