

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 15, 2016

Northern Local Governments Applaud Stone Announcement

Prince George, BC – Minister Stone’s announcement today in Prince George is the culmination of years of work by community leaders along the HWY 16 corridor, according to the North Central Local Government Association, which represents over 265+ community level politicians from 100 Mile House to the Yukon border “It started with a resolution put forward by the town of Smithers in 2012 (see below) and has been a long journey marked with a lot of sweat and tears, according to Laurey Roodenburg, president of the NCLGA.

“People often wonder why we get involved in municipal politics”, says Roodenburg, who penned BC’s first municipal resolution calling for an inquiry into murdered and missing aboriginal women. “The solutions outlined in Stone’s announcement today are a good example of the work we do at the community level. We consider this a win for northerners and it’s very satisfying. A lot of mayors, chiefs, regional directors and councilors have been involved in this issue for years”.

“Cynics might say that other highway corridors in the region need this kind of solution, too, or that the Province should pay more for these new services”, added Roodenburg, a three term Councillor from Quesnel. It isn’t perfect, but we would much rather have an imperfect solution than none at all. If nothing else, I have to say I’m impressed with Stone’s team and the amount of roll-up-the-sleeves time they’ve spent with community leaders on this. We are a non-partisan organization, but we believe in giving credit where it’s due. The Provincial government has certainly come through for northerners on this issue.”

The NCLGA hopes the transportation model announced today can be used as a template across the north-central region. “Our next convention, which brings together hundreds of decision makers and key stakeholders from across the northern two thirds of BC, will include a heavy transportation component. Travelling long distances, often in harsh weather, is a huge part of northern living”. The NCLGA’s 2017 convention, titled “Stronger Together” will take place days before the next provincial election, from May 3rd – 4th in Terrace.

From the Union of BC Municipalities archive, 2012:
Resolution C37

HIGHWAY OF TEARS SAFETY Sponsor: Smithers

WHEREAS a number of young women, mostly aboriginal, have been murdered or have gone missing along a stretch of Highway 16 in northern British Columbia now referred to as the “Highway of Tears”;

AND WHEREAS many of these missing women are believed to have been hitch hiking between communities where there is a lack of public transit:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the British Columbia government to implement the recommendation of the Highway of Tears Symposium by establishing and funding a shuttle bus service between northern communities.

UBCM RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

The Resolutions Committee understands that the specific recommendation from the Highway of Tears Symposium is that a shuttle bus service be established between each town and city along the entire length of Highway 16. This recommendation pertains to a particular region of the province, and as such, the Committee would suggest that advocacy on this issue would best be undertaken by the area association.

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