

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BC Chamber Calls for Urgency to address Crime, Violence and Public Disorder

VICTORIA B.C., September 22, 2025 — Today at the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Conference, the BC Chamber of Commerce renewed its call on senior levels of government to address the concurrent issues of crime, violence, vandalism, addictions and mental illnesses that are impacting business' ability to operate in communities across the province.

"Let there be no mistake, this is an issue in every corner of our province. Businesses have closed and many others are teetering on the brink as a result of the public disorder and street and retail crime caused by those who are suffering from addictions and mental health challenges and those who prey upon them," said Alex McMillan, CEO (Interim) of the BC Chamber of Commerce. "When businesses close, employees lose jobs and communities lose services. We must find a way to reverse the deterioration of our neighbourhoods."

The BC Chamber of Commerce has been advocating for senior level of government make policy changes to help improve the situation its members are facing and to make communities safer. Some of the proposals include:

- [Addressing the Costs Businesses Face Due to Crime and the Consequences of Illicit Drug Decriminalization \(2023\)](#) – calls for sensitive treatment for businesses who are in high impact/high crime areas to help address the disproportionate costs they face as a result of criminal behavior and vandalism.
- [Addressing Community Safety Challenges and Deficiencies in BC's Response to Toxic Drug Supply \(2024\)](#) – calls for the establishment of minimum service standards to support consistent quality, access and availability of services needed to help those who are suffering from concurrent disorders. Building out a full and comprehensive continuum of care to treat people where and when they need it.
- [Intranasal Naloxone: Eliminating Preventable Barriers for Use \(2025\)](#) – first adopted in 2023, this policy calls on the provincial government to make intranasal naloxone more readily available for businesses and citizen's use.

This year's agenda at the UBCM conference included a panel discussion intitled *Disordered Downtown: Rethinking Care for Those in Need* and at least 10 resolutions that touch on crime, homelessness, drug addiction and treatment, indicating how important this issue is for communities across the province. The BC Chamber of Commerce was pleased to participate in the panel and support the discussions at the conference.

The BC Chamber of Commerce is a member of Save Our Streets, (SOS), a non-partisan coalition of over 130 community groups, business associations and businesses who have been a vocal advocate for change since 2023.

“B.C. has gained an international reputation for being the epi-center of many of these issues,” stated Jess Ketchum, co-founder of the Save Our Streets coalition. “We have globally recognized expertise in these fields and it is time we set our sights on being the epi-center of the solution.”

“We need to see transformative, not incremental, changes. And we need to act with purpose and urgency to improve the well-being of those who are suffering from complex and difficult health challenges,” added McMillan. “Further, we need to hold those accountable who are disproportionately causing the most damage in our communities and those preying on the most vulnerable.”

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About the BC Chamber of Commerce

The BC Chamber of Commerce is the largest and most broadly based business organization in the province. Representing almost eighty-five local chambers of commerce and boards of trade and close to 32,000 businesses of every size and from every sector and region of the province, the BC Chamber of Commerce is uniquely positioned to “Know What’s on BC’s Mind.”

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