

June 1, 2009

Dear Mayor and Councillors:

The BC Seniors Advocacy Network (BC SAN) wishes to acknowledge your record of support for seniors' issues and your commitment to Age Friendly Communities. It is for this reason that we are calling on you to consider the need for an Independent Seniors' Advocate in BC.

In this province, seniors and their families are facing the many challenges that result from dealing with an overburdened and often confusing system. The wide array of services is not only confusing but can also lead to omissions, overlaps, and an overall lack of service. At the same time, there are appalling instances of neglect and abuse of seniors due to the lack of standards, regulations, and enforcement to provide adequate protection for seniors at risk.

The BC SAN is asking municipalities to endorse the request for the establishment of an Independent Seniors Advocate as an officer of the legislature by:

- 1) Passing a motion of support in principle for an Independent Seniors Advocate (see attached resolution);
- 2) Forwarding their expression of support of this resolution to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) convention in the Fall of 2009;
- 3) Requesting the UBCM to obtain the provincial government's support for this initiative; and
- 4) Forwarding their resolution to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to obtain the federal government's support for this B.C. initiative.

Your support can provide the leverage to bring forward a resolution at the UBCM and ultimately at the FCM. Thank you for considering the endorsement of this resolution.

Sincerely,
Joyce Jones
Chairperson
Seniors' Advocacy Steering Committee.
411 Dunsmuir St
Vancouver, BC., V6B 1X4
www.411seniors.bc.ca

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TITLE: Independent Seniors Advocate

WHEREAS there are no coordinated seniors' advocacy services funded by any level of government to properly investigate issues and concerns raised by seniors and their families;

AND WHEREAS the seniors' population is increasing dramatically at the same time that government funding cutbacks are severely impacting seniors;

AND WHEREAS this gap in social policy is leading to potential abuse of seniors, causes unnecessary anxiety to seniors and their families, and places additional stress on municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities support the establishment of an Independent Seniors Advocate as an officer of the legislature.