

February 19, 2021

Rt. Honourable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister
Government of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A2



Re: Cancellation of the cruise season in British Columbia

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

By way of introduction, the Tourism Industry Association of British Columbia (TIABC) advocates for the interests of its members who represent some 19,000+ businesses and 161,000 employees within the province's \$21.5 billion visitor economy (normalized year).

As CEO of TIABC, my purpose for writing is to express our concern regarding the Federal Government's recent decision to extend the ban on cruise ships with more than 100 passengers to February 2022, a move that significantly impacts tens of thousands of tourism and hospitality jobs and businesses within Vancouver, Victoria and other parts of our province.

The cruise sector generates more than \$2.7 billion for British Columbia's economy (\$4.2b in Canada) and is an integral part of the iconic experiences that people enjoy while visiting our province. Combined with the cancellation of last year's cruise season, the ramifications on employees, struggling tourism and hospitality operators, and the broader business supply chain is immense.

While we were anticipating an extension to the current ban by a few months given health and safety considerations, continued travel restrictions and other factors, the unilateral move to effectively cancel the entire cruise season without consideration of developments such as timing of herd immunity (both within and outside of Canada), as well as health and safety measures taken by cruise lines and all of the tourism and hospitality industry, permanently puts at risk this vital sector and the broader tourism ecosystem connected to this once-dynamic segment of the visitor economy.

It's important to note, that in the context of health and safety for Canadians, TIABC and the entire BC tourism and hospitality industry have generally been supportive of the travel restrictions imposed by the Government of Canada even though our industry was the first and hardest hit and continues to suffer the repercussions of these directives. At the same, we strongly believe that government and industry must work together now on a comprehensive restart plan for the visitor economy that includes key components such as a Safe Travel Pass that offers proof of vaccination and/or rapid testing, among other measures to once again encourage travel at the right time.

We strongly urge the Government of Canada to reconsider its decision on cruise, particularly if there are options to welcome non-essential international travel by the third or fourth quarter of this year. At the

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very least a reassessment of your decision in the context of pandemic conditions every three months would be welcome even though it may still result in the same outcome.

For British Columbia's visitor economy, even a partial cruise season later this year would help to avoid more insolvencies and mass layoffs that have dramatically impacted the tourism and hospitality industry since March of 2020.

Prime Minister, thank you for the work that you and government are doing to keep Canadians and visitors safe during the COVID-19 crisis. We also appreciate the many federal support programs that have helped several businesses and workers through this most trying time.

Thank you as well for your consideration of our request. Please feel free to contact me for further clarification or to answer any questions. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



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CC: Hon. Omar Alghabra, Minister of Transport
Hon. Melanie Joly, Minister of Economic Development & Official Languages
Hon. Bill Blair, Minister of Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness
Hon. Patty Hajdu, Minister of Health
Hon. Marc Garneau, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Hon. Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Finance
Vince Accardi, Acting CEO, Tourism Industry Association of Canada
Donna Spalding, Cruise Lines International Association – North West & Canada
Hon. Melanie Mark, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture & Sport, Province of BC
Richard Porges, Interim President & CEO, Destination British Columbia
Royce Chwin, President & CEO, Tourism Vancouver
Paul Nursey, President & CEO, Destination Greater Victoria

