

## Message from our President

Last week, our CEO, Caroline Grover and myself travelled to Prince George for the BC Chamber AGM. We brought forward five resolutions from our membership and received support from our colleagues across the Province.

The theme this year for four resolutions seems to be the continuing fight on four separate issues where we have seen some success and support from Provincial and Federal governments, but feel that there is still room for improvement. We recognize the positive support the BC and Canadian Chamber networks receive from government on many of our resolutions and sincerely appreciate that we are their go to organization representing business.

We are asking the Province to tighten the net and improve check points on BC border points. To ensure that no invasive mussel species enters BC's pristine lakes on boats and devastates our infrastructure and lake dependent economies.

Another on-going issue is the shipment of private purchase wine, beer and spirits between provinces. Some provinces like Ontario are refusing to allow the free flow of quality BC product. The BC Government will be asked to keep the pressure on these hold outs.

The digital media industry has become a significant economic driver in B.C. with no signs of slowing down over the next years ahead. With this growth B.C. has an opportunity to set up the infrastructure necessary for this industry to become global leaders across all its sectors and continue to strengthen B.C.'s economy.

There is an opportunity for the provincial government to work with the federal government, local governments, the academic sector and the digital industry to identify impediments to this sector's growth.

The Chamber network continues to work with the real estate and construction associations to draw the province's attention to the Property Transfer Tax that is counter productive to housing affordability. We are making joint recommendations to ensure tax flows to government are tied to indexing of new housing prices and ultimately we call for the elimination of the Property Transfer Tax. We have also asked to eliminate tax on title transfers of common owner, better breaks for first time home owners and higher rates for non-resident property owners.

And we rounded out our weekend of policy debates with a new resolution to consider changes to British Columbia's *Employment Standards Act* to harmonize its hours of work and overtime provisions with those in Alberta's *Employment Standards Code*. This is an issue with employers who have employees working in both provinces.