



The Corporation of the District of Saanich | Mayor's Office

770 Vernon Avenue Victoria BC V8X 2W7 | T 250-475-5510 | F 250-475-5440 | www.saanich.ca

Via email: crdchair@crd.bc.ca

February 1, 2021

Capital Regional District Board
c/o Colin Plant, Chair
625 Fisgard Street
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Dear Chair Plant and the Capital Regional District Board,

Re: Actions to Address the Overdose Crisis

I would like to draw to your attention that on January 25, 2021 Saanich Council considered a Report to Council and endorsed motions in support of addressing the overdose crisis, including to encourage the Capital Regional District Board to take similar action.

Saanich Council endorsed the following motions:

"That Council:

- *Direct staff to engage in discussions with local health agencies and non-profit organizations addressing the overdose crisis to discuss whether Saanich could support safe consumption sites and to explore further potential actions Saanich/local governments could take to help, and to report back to Council with options;*
- *request the Government of Canada to declare the overdose crisis a national public health emergency;*
- *reaffirm its earlier requests to senior governments on the overdose crisis and further request that the Government of Canada immediately seek input from the people most affected by the crisis and meet with provinces and territories to develop a comprehensive Pan-Canadian overdose action plan, which includes comprehensive supports and full consideration of reforms that other countries have used to significantly reduce drug-related fatalities and stigma, such as legal regulation of illicit drugs to ensure safe supply of pharmaceutical*

alternatives to toxic street drugs, and decriminalization for personal use;

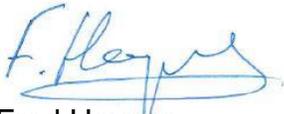
- *publicly voice its support to decriminalize simple drug possession; and*
- *share the report with all other municipal Councils in the Province of British Columbia, and write to all other municipal Councils in the Capital Region, and the Capital Regional District Board, requesting that they take similar action.”*

A copy of the report dated January 11, an excerpt of the January 25 meeting minutes and a reply received on January 28, 2021, from the Director General, Controlled Substances Directorate, Health Canada office in response to previous correspondence of October 5, 2020, are attached for further information.

Today we see lives continuing to be lost in record-breaking numbers due to the overdose crisis. British Columbia has suffered a record breaking year for lost lives due to a toxic illicit drug supply. New approaches and additional actions are needed to address this crisis.

We hope that together our continued advocacy will aid in bringing the needed resources forward.

Sincerely,



Fred Haynes
Mayor of Saanich

Enclosures

cc: Saanich Council
Paul Thorkelsson, District of Saanich, CAO