

Briefing Package on Bill 7 – 2025: Economic Stabilization (Tariff Response) Act

Overview of Bill 7

Bill 7 represents a significant shift in the governance and control mechanisms over trade, procurement, and regulations within British Columbia. Its provisions grant extensive powers to the Lieutenant Governor in Council, which may impact democratic processes, individual rights, and economic freedoms.

Key Dangers, Weaknesses, and Threats to Democracy

1. Government Overreach & Undermining Democratic Processes

- **Sections Impacted:** Part 4, specifically Sections 20, 22, and 24.
- **Explanation:** Grants Cabinet unilateral power to override existing laws and enact retroactive regulations, diminishing legislative oversight and reducing public accountability.
- **Why It's Dangerous:** Centralizes legislative power, bypassing democratic processes.

2. Increased Costs & Financial Burdens on British Columbians

- **Sections Impacted:** Part 3, Sections 13-18.
- **Explanation:** Allows the imposition of new tolls and fees on public utilities and services, with no caps on how high these charges can be set.
- **Why It's Dangerous:** Raises living costs through unchecked new tolls and fees, functioning as an open-ended taxation mechanism.

3. Destruction of Local and Small Business Protections

- **Sections Impacted:** Part 1, especially Section 2(2) and Section 3(4).
- **Explanation:** Mandates acceptance of interprovincial goods and services, potentially bypassing BC's standards for quality and safety.
- **Why It's Dangerous:** Could flood the market with substandard products, undermining local businesses and consumer safety.

4. Legal Immunity for Government & Lack of Accountability

- **Sections Impacted:** Part 2, Sections 7, 8, and 9.
- **Explanation:** Provides extensive legal immunities to government officials, shielding them from lawsuits for actions taken under this act.
- **Why It's Dangerous:** Encourages potential governmental mismanagement and corruption without consequences.

5. Mass Data Collection & Privacy Violations

- **Section Impacted:** Section 17.
 - Allows for the "collection and disclosure of personal information for the purposes of implementing tolls, fees, and charges."
- **Explanation and Danger:** Authorizes the government to gather and share personal data extensively, related to the enforcement of new financial charges.
- **Why It's Dangerous:** Increases the risk of privacy breaches and creates potential for a surveillance state, tracking individuals' movements and financial transactions without robust oversight.

Take Action Section

How to Oppose Bill 7

1. Educate and Mobilize Public Opposition:

- Utilize platforms such as social media, community meetings, and local media to highlight the risks and implications of Bill 7.
- Distribute detailed explanations of the concerning sections to increase public understanding and engagement.

2. Engage with Politicians:

- Contact Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), urging them to oppose the bill based on its potential to harm democratic processes and increase costs for citizens.

- Organize campaigns targeting politicians in swing districts, emphasizing the electoral risks of supporting such legislation.

3. Legal and Procedural Opposition:

- Explore legal challenges that highlight conflicts with federal laws and potential constitutional violations.
- Demand thorough reviews and public consultations to delay the passage and demand reconsideration of the bill's provisions.

4. Organize Protests and Demonstrations:

- Coordinate with civic groups, business communities, and concerned citizens to organize widespread protests against the bill.
- Focus on demonstrating at key political events and locations to garner media attention and public support.

5. Prepare for Electoral Consequences:

- Support and promote candidates who commit to opposing or revising Bill 7.
- Maintain public pressure and awareness through continuous engagement and advocacy against the bill.

Conclusion

Bill 7, as it stands, poses severe risks to the democratic integrity, economic stability, and privacy rights in British Columbia. Active, informed, and coordinated public opposition is crucial to challenge and prevent the enactment of these overreaching powers.