



BRITISH COLUMBIA
REAL ESTATE
ASSOCIATION

March 27, 2017

The Honourable Bill Blair, M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Submitted by email: Bill.Blair@parl.gc.ca

Dear Mr. Blair,

Re: Properties used in drug production

The British Columbia Real Estate Association (BCREA) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the federal government's plan to legalize, restrict and regulate cannabis.

BCREA is concerned about the dangers posed by properties used in the production of drugs, including cannabis—whether licensed or not. When a property has been involved in drug production, citizens can be exposed to serious health and safety risks resulting from mould, chemicals, electrical fires and invasion by criminals looking for drugs, even if the property is no longer being used for drug production. The recent *Final Report of the Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation* confirms these risks. Further, properties used in drug operations often become stigmatized, resulting in financing and insurance challenges.

Potential homebuyers, renters and REALTORS® would benefit from having ready access to basic information about whether properties have been used in drug operations, as well as information about remediation of those properties. Unfortunately, there is currently no consistency across British Columbia—or any other province, to our knowledge—as to how municipalities make information available on a property's past drug production, nor is there a national or provincial standard for remediation.

While BCREA appreciates the task force's advice to ministers that personal cultivation of cannabis be allowed, as long as that cultivation is subject to limitations (including a maximum of four plants per residence), we are concerned that enforcement of such limitations is not realistic. The capacity of local governments to ensure compliance varies widely and, based on BC's experience to date, BCREA believes personal cultivation under these terms will increase the number of homes that pose health and safety risks. In turn, housing options will be limited, because financing and insurance can be difficult to obtain on these homes.

BCREA asks that the federal government also consider these important aspects of cannabis regulation in your implementation plan. If we can be of assistance, please contact me directly (rlaing@bcrea.bc.ca; 604.742.2787).

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BCREA is the professional association for about 22,000 REALTORS® in BC, focusing on provincial issues that impact real estate. Working with the province's 11 real estate boards, BCREA provides continuing professional education, advocacy, economic research and standard forms to help REALTORS® provide value for their clients.

To demonstrate the profession's commitment to improving Quality of Life in BC communities, BCREA supports policies that encourage economic vitality, provide housing opportunities, respect the environment and build communities with good schools and safe neighbourhoods.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Laing". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert Laing
Chief Executive Officer

Copy: Randall McCauley, Canadian Real Estate Association – rmccauley@crea.ca
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