



**District of Chetwynd**

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September 12, 2024

VIA EMAIL: [FOR.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:FOR.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Honourable Bruce Ralston,  
M.L.A., Minister of Forests  
**Re: Fort St. John Canfor Closure**

Dear Minister,

The following letter has been sent to the City of Fort St. John Mayor and Council who have now sadly joined the numerous other communities in BC devastated by the Provincial Government Forestry Policy that has gutted the industry and closed so many of our mills, putting thousands out of work.

*“On behalf of the District of Chetwynd Mayor and Council, please accept this letter expressing our deepest sympathy and support following the recent announcement by Canfor of the permanent closure of the Fort St. John sawmill.*

*It is disheartening to learn that the Fort St John Canfor sawmill has now joined the ever-growing number of mills that have recently closed in BC. These mills have long been an essential part of our Northern resource-based economies and have provided many local residents with sustainable and profitable careers. The loss of livelihoods for the hundreds of affected workers is a familiar, sad, and avoidable narrative. Despite the assertions by the Ministry of Forests that the U.S. tariffs were the primary driver of this closure, the leading causes listed most often by the lumber companies are the lack of a consistent, sustainable supply of fibre and ongoing permitting challenges. The ripple effect to our local economy is staggering and ranges from the severe impact to all of the supporting businesses to a lack of affordable, homegrown lumber in a time of a critical housing shortage. The lowered natural resources revenue caused in part by these closures also hurts all of BC’s residents by adding to our Provincial debt load, increasing unemployment, and reducing our overall profitability.*

*We know that as community leaders you will do everything in your power to help all whose lives have been scarred by this closure, and please do not hesitate to let us know if we can help in any way. We also deeply hope that the Provincial Government finally begins to hear all of us who understand how Policy designed to help shape a Province can also destroy it if mismanaged.”*

#### **Vision Statement**

Chetwynd exists in order that area residents have sustainable opportunities for  
*Security, Health, Safety and Prosperity*  
in surroundings that display the best of our natural environment.

Minister Ralston, we realize that we are entering into an election and that there will be no change in the immediate future. We do fervently hope that as we begin a new governing cycle that there will finally be a realization that all who reside in BC deserve to be employed, heard, and valued; not just those in the urban centres.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the District of Chetwynd,



Allen Courtoreille  
Mayor  
District of Chetwynd



Steve McLain  
Chief Administrative Officer  
District of Chetwynd

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