



Tzeachten First Nation
Governance Office

Unit 29-6014 Vedder Rd, Chilliwack, B.C. V2R 5M4
Telephone 604.846.4888 Fax 604.846.4889



July 15, 2019

Re: British Columbia Utilities Commission Indigenous Utilities Regulation Inquiry

To Whom It May Concern,

My traditional name is Weli'leq my given name is Derek Epp, I am the Chief of Tzeachten First Nation which is part of the Stó:lō Nation. I am writing this letter on behalf of Tzeachten First Nation and our membership. It is important for the British Columbia's Utility Commission to understand a few key points as to why First Nation communities such as Tzeachten are applying for the BCUC Indigenous Utilities Regulation Inquiry:

- The tax treatment of the First Nation government and of its entities is addressed mainly in a non-treaty agreement called the Tax Treatment Agreement. The agreement provides an income tax treatment to the First Nation government and its entities equivalent to that of municipalities and "other public bodies performing a function of government in Canada."
- The Indian Act, which was passed in 1876 and continues to determine how most First Nations in Canada are governed. The Indian Act imposed a colonial governance system on First Nation communities where authority rested with the Federal Minister.
- Self-governing First Nations can make their own laws and policies and have decision-making power in a broad range of matters. This would also encompass generation and distribution of resources on their own land, utilities included.

Furthermore, Tzeachten is proud of the governance level we have achieved to date. We administer and monitor our sanitary and water services to all our citizens living on Tzeachten First Nation through service agreements. Through Land Code and the First Nations Lands Management Act, we have jurisdiction over our lands and resources, in which we carry out with quality and efficiency. This has in turn created ability and capacity within our government organization. This capacity has enabled Tzeachten to excel in various services and programming for all citizens of Tzeachten First Nation. For these reasons and more, I am confident that we will administer B.C. Hydro services through the metering and management system at the same level as any government.

Lastly, it takes taxation, own source revenue and servicing for any level of government to be sustainable and successful. We not only have the responsibility to provide the services, programs and administrative duties to Tzeachten members but we also carry the same responsibility for all our citizens living on Tzeachten First Nation. Own source revenue from such things as administering British Columbia Hydro services will enable us as a government to meet the fiscal demand of the population growth we are experiencing within our boundaries of jurisdiction.

If you need any further information on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me, I would be happy to explain why Tzeachten First Nation are applying for the same rights as municipalities under the BCUC Indigenous Utilities Regulation Inquiry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Derek Epp', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chief Derek Epp
Tzeachten First Nation