

Minister Baird,

I am writing you today with regards to the proposed Mega-Yacht Marina in Victoria's beautiful Inner Harbour. I write you out of concern for the future of this centre-piece of the city and with deep concern for the lack of public consultation in the review process. As we would both agree, the Victoria Harbour is the historic and present day heart of the city. Locals and tourists alike enjoy nearly unimpeded access along all sides. As one of the busiest harbours in Canada, public waters are an increasing rarity, to take away 2.6 hectares of public water lot for a very private and exclusive development not only alienates those who use the water and harbour on a daily and yearly basis, but it also eliminates local economic contributions generated from public harbour use. To take away public water use for the benefit of a handful of mega rich boaters, who would hardly contribute to the economy in the same way that year-round users do, would be a mistake. No economic impact study on this mega marina has been done. Do the yacht owners and their crew pay taxes to the city? Will they fuel their boats in Victoria, or simply head across the Strait of Juan de Fuca to Port Angeles, Washington where fuel is half the cost? Any "economic benefits" are highly questionable. This is not just about some short term, sporadic economic investment, it is about community. This is why failure to open the decision to public consultation is so insulting.

I recently read a letter Treasury Board Minister Stockwell Day sent to you, highlighting his desire to see the project move ahead. The last time I checked, Stockwell Day was from the Okanagan, not Vancouver Island. It must be easy for yourself and Minister Day to dismiss public input and wish to approve this project; you both have no vested interest in the community.

I urge you to open review of this project to public consultation. This is the only way people on all sides will be able to know that the community, the people who live in Victoria and use the harbour every day, had a say. No one wants to accuse our elected officials of questionable ethics or ignorant decision making, but so far, it is the only conclusion many can reach. Prove them wrong and make the smart choice, politically and ethically: **open this review to the public.** The consequences of not doing so are too great.

Thank-you for your time, I look forward to a response,

Kelly Black