

**Andrew Weaver, MLA Oak Bay – Gordon Head**  
Room 027  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria BC V8V 1X4  
Phone: 250-387-8347  
Fax: 250-387-8338



**Community Office**  
219 – 3930 Shelbourne Street  
Victoria, B.C. V8P 5P6  
Phone: 250-472-8528  
Fax: 250-472-6163

---

## **Media Statement**

**Press Conference: Elizabeth May MP, Andrew Weaver MLA**  
**For immediate release**

### **Tankers, Oil and Science**

**Victoria BC** – In its thorough submission to the Northern Gateway Joint Review Panel the British Columbia Government stated: “the Province is not able to support approval of the project, and submits that its concerns respecting NG’s ability to respond to a spill should be given serious consideration by the JRP”. Should a spill occur, the research, data and evaluation of the effects of diluted bitumen (dilbit) on both land, fresh water and marine environments are simply not available, neither are the procedures, protocols, equipment and expertise that will be required to respond.

The Federal Government is moving forward over the next two years with a \$100 million plus, 'Complementary Measures Project' (now called 'World Class') to research and model the complex waterways in the Kitimat and Hecate Straights region. In essence this is a federal government subsidy to the Northern Gateway Project, as they are unable to satisfy basic safety, environmental and regulatory requirements. In fact documents from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans identified that: “Behaviour models specific to dilbit spills do not exist, and existing commercial models for conventional oil do not allow parameter specific modifications.”

The BC Government submission to the JRP was prefaced on the current state of Enbridge’s proposal with the possibility of re-evaluating it if new information becomes available. However, the JRP also identified:

- 1: “Northern Gateway acknowledges that it knows of no techniques to effectively remove dissolved oil from the water column” (JRP paragraph 56) and “The province has serious concerns about the lack of clarity and certainty about what dilbit will do if it were to enter the water...” (JRP paragraph 58)
- 2: “the province submits that requiring Northern Gateway to show **now** that it will in fact have the ability to respond effectively to a spill is particularly important because there will be no subsequent public process in which that ability can be probed and tested”. The government’s own position is that process for the sake of process should be avoided.

Budget Estimates July 11<sup>th</sup> 2013

**Andrew Weaver:** “My question to the minister is: does that raise some concerns that it's in some sense precluding an outcome of an environmental assessment if your mandate is to get to yes, as opposed to determining whether yes is the appropriate answer?”

**Hon. Mary Polak:** “It doesn't, because of the phrase ‘without needless delay.’ What we have seen in the past, at times, in government is process for the sake of process, rather than process that gets to an answer. I don't see that as indicating it requires a granting of a certificate or a permit. What it does require is that we get that answer without having, as the letter says, needless delay”

Without the ability to publicly adjudicate any further development by Northern Gateway on spill response, or any of the other five conditions, by the Minister’s own words any further submissions will only contribute to ‘needless delay’.

**Andrew Weaver, MLA Oak Bay – Gordon Head**  
Room 027  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria BC V8V 1X4  
Phone: 250-387-8347  
Fax: 250-387-8338



**Community Office**  
219 – 3930 Shelbourne Street  
Victoria, B.C. V8P 5P6  
Phone: 250-472-8528  
Fax: 250-472-6163

---

Today the BC Green Party and Andrew Weaver call on the BC Government to follow through on the concerns they raised in their JRP submission:

- 1: Give an emphatic no to the Northern Gateway Project without 'needless delay'.
- 2: Given the evidence available today the BC Government should implement an immediate moratorium on heavy oil tankers in BC coastal waters.

On the federal level contrary to what Stephen Harper has said about awaiting the evidence and panel results, the Government of Canada has been pushing ahead with spending over \$100 million to support what should be industry based research. This comes at a time of major cuts to science funding for climate change research, marine contaminants and ELA.

In fact, documents show that the Government of Canada has been spending taxpayer's money to support this project, going as far as to name the DFO's work "the Northern Gateway Project".

This is at odds with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's own comments that "The government does not pick and choose particular projects, - Harper said -the projects have to be evaluated on their own merits." (CBC August 7<sup>th</sup> 2012).

He reiterated this in a response in the House of Commons: **June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):**

Mr. Speaker, in 2001, the Prime Minister wrote a famous letter to the former premier of Alberta in which he urged him to act "to limit the extent to which an aggressive and hostile federal government can encroach upon legitimate provincial jurisdiction". Six days ago, the provincial government of British Columbia said no to the Enbridge project. It said that Enbridge had completely failed to demonstrate any evidence that it knew how to clean up a spill or even knew what would happen with the bitumen and diluent.

Will the Prime Minister confirm that under no circumstances will the federal government become the aggressive and hostile government that approves a project as long British Columbians say no?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):**

Mr. Speaker, the project in question, of course, is subject to a joint review panel process. Obviously, we believe in the rule of law and in adjudicating these things based on scientific and policy concerns. The government will obviously withhold its decision on the matter until we see the results of the panel and its work.