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Regarding: Population Projections Project; Current demographic trends; Formal policies and clear accountabilities to safeguard the integrity of population estimates and projections used for public policy and programs; dismissal without just cause

Dear MLA Stilwell,

Former Statistics Canada Chief Statistician, Ivan Fellegi, asked "*How can society intelligently participate in the setting of national priorities if the population does not understand where we are, and where we are heading on current trends.*"<sup>1</sup> The Population Projections Project<sup>2</sup> (PPP) provides an unaltered, genuine reference for understanding where we are and where we are heading on current demographic trends. The PPP is unique in that it calculates several well defined population projection scenarios directly from Canada's censuses of population conducted every five years, arguably one of the world's best sources to watch for fundamental demographic shifts. Not only are scenarios calculated for Canada as a whole but also for provinces/territories, regions, CMAs, cities, all the way to small towns and villages.

With several scenarios, British Columbians need not accept the single scenario "*pretending to foretell the future*"<sup>3</sup> as is the case with a BC Statistics' forecast. There is no need for British Columbians to be limited to using BC Statistics' unverifiable numbers "*mostly designed to justify the programs and approaches of the government*". Instead the PPP provides insightful non-partisan analyses independent from the political direction of the current government. While BC Statistics only provides population numbers to the District level, the PPP examines population changes (by age and sex) and calculates projection scenarios for the municipal level, for example, cities and towns in your electoral district such as Parksville and Qualicum Beach.

With so much useful demographic information, Canadians should be among the best informed societies in the world; however, Canadians and especially British Columbians have fundamental misunderstandings about demographics trends. For example, "Canada's latest baby boom caught experts by surprise". After being told about fluctuating enrolment (boom bust echo etc.) a Minister of Education presumed "*it would be difficult to know demographically what will change in the riding in the immediate years ahead.*" Indeed, especially if one does not look. Also, a Medical Health Officer forecast a 30% total population increase in your riding while the School Superintendent forecast a 0% increase for school age children for the same area. When asked how the zero % change was arrived at, the same School Superintendent referred to questioning parents as "grassy knoll conspiracy theorists".<sup>4</sup> MLA Stilwell, do you agree that people who ask how a forecast is created are "grassy knoll conspiracy theorists"?

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<sup>1</sup> Fellegi, "ANALYTIC ACTIVITIES AT STATISTICS CANADA", 1999, Statistical Commission And Economic Commission For Europe. Unlike the Provincial Government of British Columbia, sources of quotes will not be withheld claiming "disclosure [of the source of a quote] is harmful to intergovernmental negotiations and relations" p.3

<sup>2</sup> [www.wminfomatics.com/PopulationProjections/CND2a.html](http://www.wminfomatics.com/PopulationProjections/CND2a.html). Also see the articles about the accuracy of the scenarios, and the similarity in scenarios calculated from counts compared to scenarios calculated from estimates.

<sup>3</sup> Fellegi, "ANALYTIC ACTIVITIES AT STATISTICS CANADA", 1999 p.5

<sup>4</sup> "With One Of The Best Statistical Agencies In The World, Canadians Have Fundamental Misunderstandings About Demographics Trends" October 20, 2016 [www.wminfomatics.com/PopGeog/articles.html](http://www.wminfomatics.com/PopGeog/articles.html).

Rather than going to the BC government to be misinformed and insulted, people can benefit from open, public access to one of the world's best sources of demographic information to find answers *"intelligently participate in the setting of priorities"*.

The PPP is being shared with grade 10 to 12 social studies and math teachers and students, as well with people who may like to be informed about demographic trends. MLA Stilwell, you, Ministers of Education, Medical Health Officers, School Superintendents, and anyone interested in intelligently participating in setting of local to national priorities, are welcome to participate. Will you look at the Population Projections Project?

As well as promoting the development of the science of demography, I would like to remind you of a solution to BC Statistics' lack of integrity. As you know, officials of British Columbia's statistical agency, BC Statistics, provided incorrect methods and data to accompany unfounded population numbers for over 10 years.<sup>5</sup> A fact discovered in your electoral riding. BC Statistics officials could have announced that the methods and data had changed and that a revised methods paper would soon be published. Instead, BC Statistics' officials chose to continue to point people to a methods paper that was not used for over a decade; therefore, BC Statistics does not "safeguard the integrity" of population numbers as claimed by ServiceBC.<sup>6</sup> Rather, BC Statistics' officials "safeguard the lack of integrity".

MLA Stilwell, has the Provincial Government of British Columbia adopted formal policies and clear accountabilities to safeguard the integrity (to include the correct methods and data to accompany "findings") of analytic products such as the population estimates and forecasts? If so, what are they? If not, why not?

Also, as you know, while serving as Population Analyst for the Provincial Government of British Columbia, I was subjected to a wrongful dismissal. To summarize, for having answered BC Statistics' Executive Director's call for assistance, for figuring out why BC Statistics' method and data produced unacceptably wrong numbers compared to the census results, I was in a position to discover that **BC Statistics officials also chose to deceive Statistics Canada regarding a study into Finance Canada's equalization program.**

Please understand, anyone in the Population Analyst position who answered the call for assistance to figure out why BC Stats' numbers were so far off, anyone who had fixed the problem, anyone who knew the real methods and data used to create population numbers, could and can be subjected to a wrongful dismissal - accused of not being able to control their behaviour making co-workers feel unsafe, removed from the contacts list, yelled at (YOU IDIOT! GET OUT OF HERE, etc.), ordered to turn in their security pass and "escorted" out of the BC Statistics' building while their grievance was before the Deputy Minister, dismissed for insubordination, accused of being bad at their job, **simply because BC Statistics officials chose to deceive interested citizens and Statistics Canada regarding the study into the equalization program, a deception that earned the incorrect claim that BC Statistics' population estimates were of "better quality" than Statistics Canada's.**

MLA Stilwell, could the dismissal rules be changed so that honest, hard working, dedicated employees can be dismissed for no given reason? In other words, people in positions of governmental authority who commit fraud would not have to make up lies to get rid of people who are in a position to discover the fraud.

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<sup>5</sup> To see some of the many unpublished changes for over 10 years see the GENERALIZATION ESTIMATION SYSTEM (GES) Small Area Population Estimation, Method and Error Evaluation, BC Statistics, August 2011, (GES 2011), page 8.

<sup>6</sup> B. Hughes for MLA MacDiarmid, [www.wminformatics.com/WManalytics/Articles\120127\PopEstWhat.html](http://www.wminformatics.com/WManalytics/Articles\120127\PopEstWhat.html)

If the Deputy Minister had simply dismissed me rather than adding “just cause”, followed by misrepresentations (i.e. claiming I was bad at my job) and denying arbitration, I would have been free to seek other opportunities without the false statements on my employment record.

Simple solutions would be for the BC Government to adopt formal policies and clear accountabilities to safeguard the integrity of analytic products (such as population estimates and projections) referred to for public policy and programs; to allow alternatives to the monopoly held by statistical agencies; and to promote the sharing of learning opportunities such as the Population Projections Project designed to shed light on where we are and where we are heading on current demographic trends.

Statistics Canada, an example of an organization with integrity, provides a vision of what a can be achieved:

We find that partnerships...contribute to securing support for our programs, they help us in maintaining our relevance, and most importantly they contribute to the virtuous circle of conceptual work leading to data development, testing of existing hypotheses and formulation of new ones, and refinement of conceptual frameworks whose validation leads to further data development.<sup>7</sup>

Please understand my efforts are not to highlight blame but rather to promote understanding of where we are and where we are heading on current demographic trends and *“to promote the study and development of the science of demography”*<sup>8</sup>.

Your truly,



William Warren Munroe

cc. Canadian Population Society, Canadian Taxpayers Federation, Evidence For Democracy

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<sup>7</sup> Fellegi, “ANALYTIC ACTIVITIES AT STATISTICS CANADA”, 1999 p.5

<sup>8</sup> An objective of the Canadian Population Society.