



BOWINN MA

**Candidate - North Vancouver-Lonsdale
BC NDP**

A licensed Professional Engineer and a certified Project Management professional, Bowinn Ma knows how to make communities better. She served as Parliamentary Secretary for Translink, where she focused on making transportation work better in Metro Vancouver – looking at the big picture and bringing people together to deliver results. As the incumbent BC NDP MLA for North Vancouver-Lonsdale, she’s been working hard to make life more affordable, improve services, and help create well-paying jobs that last for folks on the North Shore. Bowinn works hard every day to help build a better BC for all of us. You can be sure that she and John Horgan are always on your side.

QUESTION 1. *Impacts of COVID.* The availability of rapid COVID testing is a critical issue for local business as they work to ensure a safe work environment for their staff and customers. Staff/kids are back...Businesses need their staff back at work, staff need to get back to work. Given the economic impact of uncertainty around COVID in the workplace, what would you do to address the ongoing availability of rapid COVID testing?

BM Response: John Horgan and the BC NDP government have been presiding over British Columbia’s COVID-19 response since the beginning. Working with Dr. Bonnie Henry, we’ve been able to achieve some of the best health outcomes in the country while avoiding the extreme lockdowns that other jurisdictions have had to use. Using the extraordinary powers under the Emergency Program Act, John Horgan’s team issued a series of ministerial orders to ensure a coordinated response to COVID-19 across all levels of government for the duration of the provincial emergency. These included securing supply chains for critical services and equipment like testing and PPE while adapting to the evolving needs of British Columbians during the pandemic. On the North Shore, the Urgent and Primary Care Centre that the BC NDP opened in late 2019 proved to be a critical asset in our response to COVID-19. In addition to providing critical primary and urgent care services throughout the pandemic, it also served as an important testing facility that has since been supplemented by additional testing sites at Centennial Theatre and now at the ICBC Capilano Claim Centre. These concerted efforts have paid off. BC now processes just under 10,000 tests per day with most results returned within 24 hours. Resources have been committed to increase testing capacity to 20,000 tests per day in preparation for the flu season. Tests are available to anyone with potential COVID-19 symptoms. However, public health officials advise against testing people who don’t have symptoms, as it overburdens the system and produces unreliable results.

QUESTION 2. *Costs on Business.* Many small businesses are desperately trying to get their customers back. They are struggling to find ways to get the revenue they need to survive through COVID. We see the increasing burden on business related to costs that government can control such as Property Tax Assessments and the Employee Health Tax. What would you do to help keep the costs for business down so they can maintain the jobs they provide and survive this tremendous downturn?

BM Response: When COVID-19 hit, we moved swiftly to support businesses by partnering with the Government of Canada to fund the CECRA (Canada Emergency Commercial Rental Assistance) program, by ensuring that critical services like public transit and child care remained available throughout the pandemic, by cancelling scheduled tax increases, and by cutting commercial property taxes, and more. We’ll continue to support the restaurant and hospitality sector by making permanent the urgent action we took in the spring: authorizing the expansion of service areas, such as patios;

allowing restaurants and pubs to purchase beer, wine, and spirits at wholesale cost instead of liquor store retail prices; and allowing liquor delivery with takeout. We will also move to cap commission charged by third-party food delivery apps to 15%. Our Economic Recovery Plan includes a 15% refundable tax credit on eligible payroll, providing \$300 million in recovery grants to support 15,000 businesses, and investing in community infrastructure which will in turn create various opportunities for BC businesses. We will also support the tourism industry as it moves toward recovery and keep film and TV production competitive during this difficult time. However, the most important work small businesses need us to do is rooted in our healthcare response to manage the spread of coronavirus in such a way that we're able to increase economic activity without losing control of the situation and requiring an extreme lockdown like so many other jurisdictions have faced.

QUESTION 3. *Transportation & Housing.* Employees working in North Vancouver are not able to find reasonable transportation or affordable local housing options. Businesses are suffering, choosing to move, or simply closing as a result. What would you do to ensure transportation and affordable housing investments are made to support the needs of the community and the future of our local small businesses?

BM Response: Much of my first term as an MLA was focused on the issue of transportation on the North Shore. We brought all levels of government together - including First Nations - for the first time ever to agree on a collective action plan forward for the region. This resulted in the Integrated North Shore Transportation Planning Project (INSTPP), which now serves as one of the most important transportation planning documents on the North Shore, and is heralded as a model to emulate throughout the region. INSTPP also led to our government taking the first steps ever taken towards a rapid transit solution for the North Shore. In the meantime, we've moved forward on the largest public transit investment in BC history and worked to ensure that public transit services remained available throughout the pandemic when fare revenue collapsed and TransLink was on the verge of mass layoffs and service cuts. Housing affordability has been another area of focus for our BC NDP government. We've introduced measures to moderate the housing market by cracking down on speculation, while improving security for renters and building more of the housing that people need. Currently, 25,000 new units of affordable housing are complete or underway throughout the province. These measures are working, but there's still more to do. The benchmark price of a home in the Lower Mainland increased by 3.9% in the last three years under the BC NDP, in contrast to 55.1% under the last three years of the BC Liberals.

QUESTION 4. *Climate Change.* The issues of climate change remains a concern for the business community. What is your position and your party's position on the most important steps that need to be taken in the next year to address this issue?

BM Response: No matter where you live in British Columbia, you want to make sure you and your family can make a good living and enjoy a good life in the community you've chosen for your home. Above all else, you want a secure future – for today, and for your kids and grandkids in the years ahead. And you're not asking for too much. That's why we launched CleanBC in 2018. It's our plan to move British Columbia towards a clean-energy economy and future that drastically cut the harmful emissions causing climate change. The CleanBC plan included targets to reduce emissions by 40% by 2030, 60% by 2040, and 80% by 2050. Last week, John Horgan expanded on this and committed to passing legislation requiring BC to reach net-zero emissions by 2050. We are already requiring new buildings and retrofits to be more energy efficient and cleaner – every new building constructed in BC must be net-zero ready by 2032, but we will further accelerate energy efficiency retrofits for both residential and commercial buildings. We also plan to:

- Expand our zero-emissions vehicle program to industrial vehicles
- Ramp up CleanBC's industrial emissions strategy
- Move towards a net-zero emission bus fleet
- Employ best-in-the-world emission detection
- Fast-track our industrial electrification strategy
- Review oil and gas royalties from an environmental lens
- Invest in made-in-BC carbon capture technology.

QUESTION 5. *Retraining Underemployed Workforce to Meet Opportunities in the BC Tech Sector.* The NV Chamber has championed a provincial call for the funding of retraining and skill enrichment that will help more fully employ new Canadians and other individuals with technical aptitude to support the growing needs of our growing local and provincial technology sector. What is your position on this and what steps would you take to tap into this talent and economic potential in our community?

BM Response: BC is fortunate to be home to a thriving tech sector, and it is important to foster this growth by providing the retraining and skill development supports to meet the needs of this growing industry. Issues surrounding affordability impact the tech sector, and we have made gains by creating an innovation corridor in Surrey to attract jobs, talent, and create an innovative hub to further support the tech sector. We have also provided grants and supports for technology programs, to ensure students are prepared to enter a rapidly evolving technology-driven economy. To further support the BC tech sector, we will create 2,000 new tech-relevant spaces in public post-secondary institutions, ensuring that there is a workforce ready to meet the needs of the sector. We will also offer grants to start-ups to hire transitioning workers, and expand scholarships for those using online courses needed for skill upgrades. We will also establish a new Worker Training & Job Opportunity Office to support our Economic Recovery Plan, which will focus on retraining workers who have been impacted by COVID-19. It is vital that we further foster and support this thriving industry, and make BC a hub for the tech sector. We also intend to increase immigrants' participation in the workplace by streamlining foreign credential assessments processed by various regulatory bodies and health-related Colleges to make sure immigrants can more easily strengthen their language skills and access job opportunities in their field of training.

