

MOTION ON NOTICE

B.2

2. Emergency Preparedness and Loss of Federal Funding

MOVER: Councillor Adriane Carr

SECONDER:

WHEREAS:

1. Public Safety Canada has announced that, in 2013, it will close down the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) which, over the past 32 years, has helped fund national civil preparedness for emergencies and critical infrastructure protection with grants of over 170 million dollars;
2. The City of Vancouver has regularly applied for and received JEPP grants, including three grants this year for testing of emergency plans, training of a new "Team Vancouver" group of civilian volunteers, and an emergency communications radio system;
3. We are in a period of heightened potential for emergencies and natural disasters including more frequent extreme weather events due to accelerating climate change, increasing likelihood (based on geological evidence) of a large magnitude earthquake, and increased potential for a massive Coronal Massive Ejection (CEM) event which happen every several hundred years during periods of high solar flare activity (noting that the last major CEM event occurred in 1859 and our sun is now entering a period of higher solar flare activity) and which could knock out power grids and electrical infrastructure as happened during a small CEM event in Quebec in 1989;
4. Emergency preparedness is essential in helping mitigate disasters. In the case of CEM events, for example, scientists estimate that they can give from 20 minutes to several hours warning which could enable city officials and citizens to mitigate damage by "unplugging" communication systems and electrical circuits and isolating portions of the grid;
5. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities at its 2012 annual general meeting and the emergency community across Canada are requesting that the Government of Canada restore funding for JEPP.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Vancouver write to the Government of Canada and urge continued funding of the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program as a matter of public safety and security;

FURTHER THAT staff report back on an assessment of the possible impacts of losing Joint Emergency Preparedness Program funds on the City's emergency preparedness, especially preparations for climate-related, seismic and CEM-related emergencies.

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