

MOTION

4. Solidarity with Indian Farmers (Member's Motion B.3)

At the Council meeting on March 9, 2021, Council referred the above-noted motion to the Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities meeting on March 10, 2021, in order to hear from speakers.

On March 10, 2021, the Committee completed hearing from speakers and began debate. Subsequently, a motion to extend the meeting past 10 pm was lost; therefore, debate and decision on this item will continue at the Standing Committee on City Finance and Services meeting on March 31, 2021.

Submitted by: Councillor Swanson

WHEREAS

1. The Indian government made changes to the agricultural laws without consulting the farmer's organizations;
2. These changes, in the opinion of the farmers, severely negatively impact their livelihood by:
 - a) Not granting minimum support price in the law;
 - b) Allowing traders to stockpile product to create shortages in the market place to increase price to the consumer;
 - c) Having dispute resolution between farmers and corporations under contract farmers handled by a committee rather than the judicial system;
3. A majority of Indian farmers are small farmers looking after less than 5 acres of land. They decide what they want to plant to meet their family needs rather than plant crops to fulfill corporate needs;
4. More than 60% of the Indian population relies on farming;
5. Due to high unemployment in the unskilled labour pool, the livelihood of families displaced by these laws will be severely negatively impacted;
6. The suicide rates amongst Indian farmers show the current fragility of the agriculture industry, which is battling the effects of climate change and massive crop failures;
7. During the ongoing protest in New Delhi the government is depriving the protesters of basic necessities and is violating their basic human rights;
8. Lending our voice to support India's farmers would lend support for the principle that in Canada and around the world local farmers are indispensable to the social fabric of any country must be supported and protected; and
9. The BC Provincial Government has joined all major federal political parties in speaking out against these legislative changes.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Vancouver City Council stands in solidarity with the Indian farmers and directs the Mayor to write to the provincial and federal governments to ask them to continue to speak out against these laws as well as the repressive measures against Indian citizens of their rights to expression and liberty, and to accelerate the message of concern to the Indian government.

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