

**From:** Anderson, George <[G.Anderson@leg.bc.ca](mailto:G.Anderson@leg.bc.ca)>  
**Sent:** November 14, 2025 1:17 PM  
**Cc:** Anderson.MLA, George <[George.Anderson.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:George.Anderson.MLA@leg.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Working together, the Professional Reliance Act

Dear Mayors & Councillors,

My name is George Anderson. I am the MLA for Nanaimo-Lantzville.

Recently, I tabled a Private Members Bill M 216 *Professional Reliance Act*. The goal of the *Act* is to uplift the work that is already occurring in British Columbia.

Several municipalities, such as the City of Prince George, Town of Ladysmith, City of Surrey, and many others across British Columbia already utilize professional reliance or a certified professional program.

On November 6, 2025, I met with the Union of British Columbia President Cori Ramsey and Executive Director Maclsaac regarding the bill, and I am hopeful that UBCM and I can work together to deliver what British Columbians expect of us.

Attached to this email you will find the following:

- A briefing note on the bill, with a Q&A fact sheet;
- A letter of Support from Homes for Living a Non-Profit based in Victoria; and
- A Joint Letter of Support signed by the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade and Urban Development Institute.

Lastly, you will find an op-ed that I've written titled "British Columbia can Build the Homes we need faster, if We Trust the People Who know how to build them." It makes the case for reform that lets municipalities accept certified work from provincially regulated professionals to accelerate housing approvals without lowering standards. Moreover, the piece uses examples of where this practice is already in place in British Columbia, such as in Vancouver, Surrey, the town of Ladysmith, and City of Prince George.

Lastly, I have included a few articles on the bill:

<https://www.beautifulnanaimo.ca/posts/2025/11/01/bill-m216>

<https://businessexaminer.ca/victoria-articles/item/editorial-professional-reliance-act-could-speed-up-home-building-significantly/>

<https://nanaimobulletin.com/2025/10/30/nanaimo-lantzville-mla-introduces-bill-to-streamline-housing-approvals/>

As a former City Councillor and Regional District Director, I have tremendous respect for the work that all of you do to build our communities.

If you have suggestions on how we can make this bill work for your community, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office to set up a meeting or send your comments directly to me.

Sincerely,

George



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

**George A.G. Anderson** | MLA, Nanaimo – Lantzville

[g.anderson@leg.bc.ca](mailto:g.anderson@leg.bc.ca)

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## **Briefing Note re: Professional Reliance Act**

**Prepared by:** MLA George Anderson, Nanaimo - Lantzville

**RE: *Professional Reliance Act***

**Purpose:** To strengthen local government capacity, accelerate housing approvals, and reduce costs by trusting qualified professionals under existing provincial regulation.

### **Overview**

British Columbia needs to build housing and community infrastructure faster without compromising safety or accountability.

Right now, many local governments are required to re-review the technical work of provincially licensed professionals (engineers, architects, etc.), even though those professionals are already accountable under the *Professional Governance Act* (PGA).

This duplication drains staff time, delays housing, and increases costs for families and local taxpayers.

The *Professional Reliance Act* fixes that.

It allows municipalities to **accept certified work from qualified professionals** and move projects forward faster, freeing up staff for community planning and public engagement.

### **Key Benefits**

#### **For young people:**

- More homes coming to market sooner, making home ownership and renting more attainable.

#### **For families:**

- A better chance to find or own a home in the community they love.

#### **For local governments:**

- Less red tape, more capacity, and reduced administrative costs.

#### **For taxpayers:**

- Savings on staff duplication and lower development costs over time.

### **How It Works**

- If a professional certified under the *Professional Governance Act* (PGA) seals their work, local governments can accept it without a second technical peer review.
- The professional remains fully liable and accountable through their regulatory body (Architectural Institute of British Columbia, Engineers and Geoscientist of British Columbia, etc.).
- Municipalities maintain control over zoning, design guidelines, and policy decisions — this reform only streamlines *technical* approvals.
- Disputes between professionals can be referred to the Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance (OSPG).

### **What It's Not**

- Not privatization - accountability stays public through OSPG oversight.
- Not deregulation - standards stay the same. The process just becomes faster.
- Not a download to municipalities. Simply a reduction in administrative pressure.

## **Q&A Sheet – Professional Reliance Act**

### **Q1: Why is this bill needed?**

**A:** Many housing projects are delayed because local governments have to re-review work already completed by licensed professionals.

This duplication adds time, costs, and frustration. The bill modernizes that process so projects move faster and local governments can focus on planning great communities.

### **Q2: Will this reduce oversight or lower standards?**

**A:** No. Professionals are still regulated, insured, and accountable under the *Professional Governance Act* and the Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance. Oversight remains public and strong.

### **Q3: How does this help housing affordability?**

**A:** Every month of delay adds cost. Both for builders and, eventually, for families. By removing redundant steps, we reduce those costs and get homes to market faster.

### **Q4: Does this take power away from local governments?**

**A:** No. Local councils still decide zoning, design, and land-use policy. The *Act* streamlines technical review so staff can focus on community priorities instead of paperwork.

### **Q5: How does this help smaller municipalities?**

**A:** Smaller towns often struggle to hire engineers or architects for peer review. This bill saves them those costs and lets them rely on provincially regulated professionals instead.

**Q6: Is this a “developer giveaway”?**

**A:** No. Developers still meet all local requirements and hire qualified, accountable professionals. The difference is that cities won't waste months re-checking certified work.

**Q7: What about unionized staff in local governments?**

**A:** This bill doesn't eliminate positions; it helps municipal staff focus on higher-value work like long-term planning, housing strategy, and public consultation.

**Q8: Is this costly to implement?**

**A:** No. It uses existing provincial structures under the *Professional Governance Act* and the OSPG. Local governments may make small bylaw or process adjustments, but the overall effect is cost-saving.

**Q9: What about RidgeView Place in Langford? Couldn't this potentially lead to more of that?**

**A:** The issues at Ridgeview Place occurred under the existing system and partially informed this bill.

This bill would make it clear that the professionals remain fully liable and accountable through their regulatory body. Further clarifying that local governments will not be liable for the actions of certified professionals.

**Q10: Are there any other municipalities using this model or Professional Reliance?**

**A:** Yes, there are several certified professional programs in British Columbia, for example:

- \*City of Vancouver
- \*City of Burnaby
- \*District of West Vancouver
- \*Town of Ladysmith
- \* City of Prince George
- \*City of Surrey
- \* District of Squamish
- \*City of Maple Ridge
- \*City of Abbotsford

## Anderson.MLA, George

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**From:** Homes For Living <hello@homesforliving.ca>  
**Sent:** November 10, 2025 9:59 PM  
**To:** Homes For Living  
**Subject:** Support for Bill B216 - Professional Reliance Act

Dear Member of the Legislative Assembly,

Homes for Living supports a move towards increasing reliance on qualified professionals to streamline building permits in urban areas, and supports [Member Bill M216](#), the *Professional Reliance Act*.

Homes for Living is a community housing advocacy group, made up of volunteers concerned about the housing crisis in the Capital Regional District. The region has a dire housing shortage, with housing completions falling [well short](#) of what is needed to achieve broad affordability. The shortage is driven by zoning codes that make new multifamily housing illegal, high fees on new housing, and lengthy permitting timelines that means that families can only move into new housing years after it is first proposed by a proponent.

These challenges are most acute in built-up urban areas, such as the City of Victoria, where infill housing is both the most sustainable and cost-effective type of new housing, but also the most difficult, expensive, and time-consuming to build. To meet affordability goals, we must ensure that it is faster and easier to build dense infill housing rather than suburban sprawl.

The changes proposed by Bill M216, the *Professional Reliance Act*, would help alleviate one aspect of this challenge. While additional, substantial reforms are needed to ensure that municipal zoning is not a constraint on new housing, reducing approval timelines after a project receives zoning approval is also critical. We have received feedback from developers that the process and degree of inspections and verifications varies widely between CRD municipalities, with some trusting professionals to do their due diligence, while others require duplicative review and inspection of projects that are certified by an applicant's Architect and Engineers.

We would submit that infill housing is a good candidate for a consistent Professional Reliance framework. Infill housing is typically built in areas with no or minimal environmental concerns (environmental engineering being an area with past concerns about Professional Reliance approaches). It should be noted that similar frameworks have been adopted in other jurisdictions where quickly building housing is a priority. For instance, the County of LA implemented a pilot [self-reliance approval](#) process that allowed builders of certain categories of homes to self-certify that their home designs meet code.

Best regards,

*The Homes for Living team*

**ABOUT HOMES FOR LIVING:** We are a community housing advocacy group, made up of volunteers concerned about the housing crisis in the capital region. Homes for Living is advocating for more homes through policy reform to make Victoria more affordable for people across the income and housing needs spectrum. We are a volunteer-funded non-profit, and our voting members cannot be developers, politicians, or their relatives.

More: <https://homesforliving.ca/about-us>

 **Homes for**

November 14, 2025

Hon. George Anderson  
MLA, Nanaimo-Lantzville  
[George.Anderson.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:George.Anderson.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

***RE: Support for Bill M 216 – Professional Reliance Act***

Dear Mr. Anderson,

On behalf of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade (GVBOT) and the Urban Development Institute (UDI), we wish to express our support for the intent of *Bill M 216 – Professional Reliance Act*.

This proposed legislation will help address a major concern of the development community by recognizing the importance of improving the efficiency and predictability of the development approvals process across British Columbia. Expediting the development approvals process by reducing redundancies in the review process, while upholding the professional standards of qualified professionals (QPs), is another regulatory tool which would support the more timely delivery of new homes for British Columbians who need more housing options.

A significant portion of the cost to build a new home is attributed to government-imposed measures – whether it be fees, long review processes, or new requirements. Of particular concern is rising construction costs, which are being largely driven by building code requirements. One builder recently reviewed their project proformas over the past 15 years, which revealed that construction costs have soared to over \$562.59 per square foot – up from under \$204.19 per square foot. This is well beyond the Consumer Price Index rate of inflation. These costs ultimately fall to homebuyers and renters, compounding the affordability crisis across the province.

This professional reliance initiative comes at a time when the cost of delivering new homes has reached a breaking point. Higher construction costs, increased interest rates, and government fees combined with lengthy approval timelines make it increasingly difficult to bring new housing to market that homebuyers and renters can afford.

As has been noted in the debate on *Bill M 216*, municipalities already depend extensively on QPs to support the development approval process, and the proposed framework recognizes that work in a constructive and transparent way. For example, the municipalities of Vancouver, Burnaby, and Surrey all utilize a Certified Professionals

Program for the issuance of Building Permits. These programs would be enhanced through this legislation, by ensuring the original purpose of the programs (rapid permit issuance through professional review and reliance) are achieved.

The *Professional Reliance Act* offers an opportunity to apply those learnings province-wide, so that all communities can benefit from timely growth and responsible oversight. That said, there may have to be regulatory powers that differentiate between technical and urban design-related Development Permit requirements. Where technical requirements are definitive, urban design-related requirements require a more nuanced by nature and may be better suited for review by local governments.

Some additional issues for consideration at the Committee stage include:

- Ensuring the legislation applies to the City of Vancouver, which is under the *Vancouver Charter*;
- Ensuring the legislation applies to all trade permits, such as sprinklers, plumbing, and electrical permits;
- Instead of relying on the Superintendent for dispute resolution, move this task to the regulated professions (e.g. Engineers and Geoscientists of BC, Architectural Institute of BC); and
- Ensuring the legislation is coordinated with the *Building Act*.

Our organizations want more British Columbians to have more housing options available to them. Establishing a more consistent, streamlined, and professionally informed process will help support more timely approvals for new housing supply by reducing the uncertainty, risks, and carrying costs that currently delay projects and reduce affordability. We encourage all MLAs to pass *Bill M 216*, and would be pleased to discuss in greater detail as this makes its way through the legislative process

Sincerely,



Bridgitte Anderson  
President and CEO  
Greater Vancouver Board of Trade



Anne McMullin  
President and CEO  
Urban Development Institute

## **Opinion: British Columbia can Build the Homes we need faster, if We Trust the people who know how to build them**

By George Anderson, MLA for Nanaimo–Lantzville

Date: November 5, 2025

British Columbia is at a crossroads where the urgency of the moment around housing meets the opportunity to do things differently. Across the province from Nanaimo to Prince George, to Coquitlam, to Vernon: people want homes built faster, communities planned better, and governments that deliver.

However, our ability to build homes can be trapped in a process that mistakes repetition for rigour. Across the province, housing projects sit waiting not for financing or workers, but for busy municipal staff to recheck the work that has been completed by qualified professionals.

This isn't due to mistakes or distrust, but instead because the system of approvals hasn't kept up to meet the needs of community.

Right now, we have reached a point where delay is the most expensive material in construction. As a former City Councillor and Commercial lawyer at one of Canada's largest law firms, I have witnessed this firsthand.

That's why on October 21, 2025, as a private member, I introduced the *Professional Reliance Act*. A reform designed to move housing approvals from backlog to breakthrough.

The premise is simple: when a provincially regulated professional, such as an architect or engineer, certifies their work that certification should stand. These individuals are licensed under the *Professional Governance Act*, accountable to the Province, and insured for the public interest.

Under this proposed legislation, local governments across BC would be empowered to accept certified work with confidence instead of double checking the work which causes an extensive backlog. The accountability remains, but it rests where the expertise already exists.

Some people might wonder whether or not this approach can be done. However, this approach is already working in multiple municipalities in British Columbia. In Vancouver, the Certified Professional Program facilitates the issuance of building permits for new or existing buildings, thereby allowing construction to start earlier. Certified professionals are trusted to sign off on specific design and structural components, expediting reviews without compromising safety.

In Surrey, a fast-growing city on track to becoming the largest city in British Columbia, managing thousands of permits annually, utilizes professional reliance principles to streamline engineering and building applications, giving staff more capacity to focus on infrastructure planning.

In Prince George, a smaller municipality, a professional reliance building permit stream allows certified experts to take responsibility for technical submissions. This process saves both time and taxpayer resources while maintaining full public oversight.

The *Professional Reliance Act* builds on the successful approaches already taken by Local Governments and extends them province-wide.

This is not deregulation. This bill demonstrates trust through structure creating a framework where local governments retain control over zoning, land-use planning, and design, while relying on professional certification to move projects forward faster.

The result: British Columbians keep what we value: safety, public accountability, and professional standards. Removing what we can no longer afford: unnecessary duplication, months of delay, and rising costs that push homes further out of reach for everyday people.

When housing approval drags on, the cost doesn't disappear. Every day, month, and year of delay is passed down to: renters, first-time buyers, and to families who are saying their hopes for stability fade a little more with every delay.

For young people, this bill provides the hope of homes coming to market sooner.

For families, this bill provides hope of a better chance to own a place in the community they love.

For local governments, this bill means more results, less red tape, and the capacity to serve British Columbians more efficiently.

For British Columbia's economy, this bill means aligning the skills of professionals, skilled trades, and planners toward a common shared goal of building together.

Lastly, housing is a non-partisan issue. As legislators, regardless of our political stripes, we want to achieve the same goal of ensuring British Columbians can afford homes, work in their community, and live a good life. Through this bill we can demonstrate that when legislators put outcomes ahead of ideology, we can show good governance allowing British Columbia to thrive.

My hope in introducing the Professional Reliance Act is start a conversation about how we realize our potential as a province.

British Columbia is a province defined by ambition. British Columbia leads in clean technology, innovation, and sustainable development. However, leadership means matching our vision with velocity, aligning our systems with the urgency British Columbians feel, and ensuring our systems match our ambition.

Should the bill become law, it will be a signal that in British Columbia we still believe in what is possible.

We can build faster without cutting corners.

We can build smarter without losing oversight.

And we can build a province where young people see their future, not their exit.

When we create the conditions to build easier and smarter, we make it easier to belong.

That's what British Columbians expect and deserve.

And that's what this legislation delivers.