

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

October 18, 2009

The Editor
Vancouver Sun

Vaughn Palmer's Saturday October 17th column regarding public sector and ministerial compensation left out some important details.

In particular, Mr. Palmer recommends the B.C. cabinet follow the Government of Alberta in reducing salaries for ministers. In actual fact, that is exactly what has taken place in B.C.

Under legislation, every cabinet minister has 10 per cent of their ministerial salary held back and only returned if the budget is balanced. As noted in the budget introduced on September 1, B.C. is anticipated to run deficits for the next four years. Therefore, for every one of those years cabinet ministers will see a 10 per cent reduction in their ministerial salaries.

With respect to the broader public service, we made it clear in the Throne Speech that we would not consider wage rollbacks for the public service as some have suggested. But we have also been clear that the province would not be in a position to fund wage increases while in a deficit situation.

As a result, less than one per cent of the public service workforce has been impacted by recent budget decisions. Our focus has been on ensuring we find every available dollar through administrative savings that can go towards funding vital health, education and social services, and we will continue to do that.

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