
For Immediate Release

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Partnerships B.C.'s methods called into question by top forensic accountant

(Halifax) – British Columbia's most respected forensic accountant has called into question the methods of Partnerships B.C. – the company hired by the MacDonald government to 'evaluate' P3 projects for our province.

In a report released today, Ron Parks finds that public private partnerships approved by the B.C. agency have higher costs for taxpayers, bias and secrecy.

The report also finds a consistent pro-privatization bias in the way that the B.C. government (through Partnerships B.C.) compares costs when assessing major projects. On top of this, the B.C. government is routinely denying access to critical information, which limits the public's ability to know that its interests are protected on P3 projects.

Parks and his colleague Roseanne Terhart evaluated four P3 projects in B.C.: the Abbotsford Regional Hospital and Cancer Centre, the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement, the Academic Ambulatory Care Centre (Diamond Centre) and the Canada Line.

In the case of the Diamond Centre – they report that the actual nominal cost of a P3 was more than double that of a publicly procured project.

CUPE Nova Scotia President Danny Cavanagh says, "This report is clear evidence that the MacDonald government has been using Partnerships B.C. as a kind of smokescreen to justify doing P3's here in our province.

"If this government goes back down the road of P3's, it will be a taxpayer rip-off, plain and simple. The hundreds of millions of extra dollars we pay in what amounts to 'privatization premiums' should be used to improve roads, transit, schools and health care," says Cavanagh.

Parks' report was commissioned by CUPE B.C. Ron Parks and Rosanne Terhart are with the firm Blair Mackay Mynett Valuations Inc. Parks is best known for his investigation into B.C.'s so-called 'Bingogate' in the mid-1990s.

The full report is available at www.cupe.bc.ca.

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