

# WHY WON'T PREMIER CHRISTY CLARK SHOW SOME 'LADY-BALLS' BY STIFFENING-UP CAMPAIGN FINANCE CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAWS

By: Kerry Morris - January 10, 2016



Could it be that Christy won't stiffen-up 'Conflict-of-Interest' legislation because it would mean she couldn't sell favours in trade for campaign finance support in public elections? If I were a betting man, I'd put my money on 'YES'!

After a province wide engagement to consider campaign finance, wherein many of the participants tabled proposals for tighter 'Conflict-Of-Interest' legislation, Christy Clark has taken the low road showing no leadership in this area.

While I concede there are many good things in the new legislation, which requires a definitive schedule setting out the actual campaign finance limits, the fact is it lacks stiffer 'Conflict-Of-Interest' standards which should embarrass Clark.

As Canadian's watch with interest, this years presidential election campaign south of the boarder, I think it is safe to say that the vast majority of us think Donald Trump is a 'Horses Ass', all-be-it a very rich one. So it is with more than a little trepidation that I point to a 'Trumpism' in respect of political donations that quite clearly hits at the core of the 'Conflict-of-Interest' issue.

On the subject of politicians and money: "When they call, I give. And you know what? When I need something from them two years later, three years later, I call them. They are there for me."

Corporate and union donors to political candidates make those donations to ensure protection of their interests. Anyone who thinks that political donations come without strings is simply naive. For example, I believe every single dollar City of North Vancouver Mayor Darrell Mussatto took in the 2013 municipal election came to him with a string attached. The Gooding's gave the 'Slate' \$15,000, and they got a 6.25 FSR tower at 161 East Keith. Dito Tom Nellis who got the Mayors support for Gambling, which only went sideways when Keating got read the riot act for having hitched his wagon to a 'Union-Buster' like Nellis by CUPE, another donor (<http://kerrymorris.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Union-Busting.jpg>, <http://kerrymorris.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/LRB-Decision.pdf>) The Slate is going to vote down the Museum so they can give the Pipe Shop and Site 5 back, in part, to Pinnacle, another donor, in pursuit of the 'Mayors Vision' for the Shipyards. Hollyburn Properties, another donor, is going to get a green-light for a new 18 storey tower at 13th and Lonsdale. Then there is the Moodyville development advocates, who's artist ringleader went door-to-door with copies of dirt he and his wife published on his website, in trade for the 'Slates' support causing transition of the City's most affordable RS-1 housing into what will soon become the densest area in the whole of the City and the North Shore. Anthem donated to 'Slate' members and got re-zoning approval so that it could complete the purchase of the Ridgeway Annex school. And the list goes on.

In the last provincial election cycle, Craig Keating continued to sit as a municipal councillor. In the same month Keating voted to approve the Onni Centerview development proposal at 13th and Lonsdale, the largest and densest construction proposal in the City's history, Onni made a \$78,500 donation to the provincial NDP, the vast majority of which flowed to Keating in support of his campaign to become MLA in the riding North Vancouver Lonsdale. I believe Keating sold his vote for the Onni project so that he could access that donation. So wrong!

But the real question is, if as Mussatto makes a habit of saying, donors donate because they like his vision and not because they're buying his vote, do you think they'd continue to donate if doing so resulted in he, Keating and the rest of the 'Slate', having to recuse from a vote involving a donor? I think not! In fact, if advocates for densification were compelled to recuse, then no developer in his right mind would want to compel their supporters to push back from the table withdrawing a supportive vote. And therein lies the rub. Christy Clark also wants to be able to sell political support to secure donations but would likely be caught up in the same difficult web at the provincial campaign finance level if she creates new municipal conflict of interest standards. Thus, NO 'Lady-Balls'.