



wilderness tourism

ASSOCIATION OF THE YUKON

November 30, 2021

Currie Dixon
Leader of the Official Opposition
Yukon Legislative Assembly
Box 2703
Whitehorse, YT
Y1A 2C6



Dear Mr. Dixon,

RE: Yukon Party Support for Extending Cancer Presumption to Wildland Firefighters – YWCHSB

The Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon represents the interests of Yukon's Wilderness and Adventure Tourism operators. We write to you today to ask that you temporarily pause your support of the request for extension of the cancer presumption to include Yukon's Wildland Firefighters in Yukon's new proposed Worker's Compensation legislation.

It is our understanding that Wildland Firefighters are currently included in the same rate category (Resource & Transportation – Low) as a number of other industries including: aviation, trappers, and adventure tourism, to name a few; and that expanding the presumption to Wildland Firefighters would result in significant rate increases to workers' compensation premiums for all industries included in this rate category.

As you know, Yukon's tourism industry has been devastated by the ongoing pandemic. Navigating an extremely fragile road to recovery, our industry faces any number of uncertainties on a daily basis. Inclusion of this presumption at this point in time brings unexpected additional financial burden to a number of Yukon private sector businesses that are already strained and struggling to remain operational. Any unplanned operational cost increases for wilderness and adventure tourism businesses right now – which are almost 100% dependent on visitor traffic from outside the Yukon and Canada – would be detrimental to the wilderness/adventure tourism sector and our industry as a whole.

While we support and appreciate the critical role of all Yukon's firefighters in ensuring the protection and safety of Yukoners and visitors alike, we feel that this request requires proper due diligence before the inclusion is extended to include Wildland Firefighters. We believe that evidence must be provided through research, and consultations conducted, to understand the impacts to private sector small businesses in order to support informed decisions being made at the highest levels.

The Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon does not support the request to expand the presumption to include Wildland Firefighters at this time and we urge you to consider small business and the future of Yukon's tourism industry in your deliberations in the Legislative Assembly.

Yours in tourism,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kalin', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kalin Pallett
President

Cc:

Kate White – Leader of the Third Party (Yukon NDP)

Richard Mostyn – Minister Responsible for YWCHSB

Neil Hartling – Chair, Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon

Tammy Beese – Chair, Yukon Chamber of Commerce