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## NEWS RELEASE

### *Standing strong for B.C.: Budget prepares to defend British Columbians*

VICTORIA — The provincial government has released Budget 2025: Standing Strong for B.C., a measured plan to protect jobs and the public services people rely on, while preparing British Columbia's economy to withstand the unpredictable impacts of unjustified tariffs.

“With uncertainty on the horizon, it is prudent to protect the essentials and prepare for what comes next by investing in our greatest resource – the people of British Columbia,” said Brenda Bailey, Minister of Finance. “While our economy is built to withstand the threat of U.S. President Donald Trump’s tariffs relatively better than most other provinces, the impact would still be significant. Our budget prepares us to carefully navigate these uncharted waters so we can put people first and support businesses as we build a stronger, more self-sufficient future.”

Budget 2025 manages B.C.’s finances and invests in critical public services to meet growing demand. It provides \$9.9 billion more in operating funding over three years, including \$7.7 billion in new funding for health care, education and social services. The budget also includes \$4 billion in annual contingencies to address unpredictable costs, including a new collective bargaining mandate, pressures on critical services and for emerging needs, such as potential tariff response measures.

The budget provides \$4.2 billion to respond to growing demand for health-care services, improve access to primary care, continue hiring health-care workers, reduce wait times at emergency departments and hospitals, and open and operate new and renovated hospitals and facilities. It also provides funding to support addictions treatment and recovery programs.

To address health-care needs throughout the province, \$15.5 billion in capital funding is provided over the fiscal plan to help build and upgrade hospitals, long-term care facilities and cancer centres.

Budget 2025 provides \$370 million over three years to support students in the K-12 education system, including hiring additional teachers, special education teachers, teacher psychologists and counsellors. The budget also invests \$4.6 billion over the fiscal plan in capital funding to build and upgrade schools.

Funding is increasing for services for children and youth with support needs, children and youth in care, and adults with developmental disabilities.

“In times of uncertainty, we will be there for British Columbians. We are continuing to invest in the services people rely on to take care of their families, get the care they need, when they need it, and provide a good future for everyone across the province,” Bailey said. “Our government is focused on building an economy that creates the wealth that is needed to deliver more jobs with bigger paycheques, and protect our public services in the face of the threat of unjustified tariffs.”

Growing a stronger and more diverse economy will help protect people from instability outside B.C.’s borders, with investments that will bring good-paying jobs to the province as part of sustainable industries.

Budget 2025 invests \$30 million over three years to support high-quality jobs through the Integrated Marketplace Initiative’s work to accelerate innovation in B.C., and boosts tax credits for the province’s film sector and home-grown interactive digital media and video game industry.

It includes funding of \$95 million in critical highway and bridge maintenance over three years to help people and goods move safely across the province, with another \$47 million over the fiscal plan to support BC Transit networks outside of the Lower Mainland.

Capital funding of \$15.9 billion over three years will support transit, infrastructure and highway improvements to connect communities throughout the province.

Total capital investments of \$59.9 billion over the fiscal plan are anticipated to support 180,000 good-paying direct and indirect jobs over three years.

People continue to deal with the challenge of daily costs, especially when it comes to finding a home they can afford. Budget 2025 commits an additional \$318 million over three years to BC Builds as part of the Province’s goal of delivering thousands more rental homes for middle-income people.

B.C. remains focused on making sure people, not speculators, can find affordable housing by increasing the Speculation and Vacancy Tax to 3% for foreign owners and untaxed worldwide owners and 1% for Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

The number of lower-income working families receiving help with their monthly rent payment will nearly double as part of \$375 million in additional funding for rental support programs over three years.

With this increase, the average supplement families receive under the Rental Assistance Program will rise from \$400 to \$700 per month. An additional 1,600 seniors will receive rental support through the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program, with average supplements growing by 30%. This is the second increase to funding for SAFER recipients in the past year.

Stronger-than-expected returns on investments means ICBC can provide another \$110 rebate this year to help personal and commercial drivers with costs amidst an uncertain economic climate.

The Province is investing \$325 million over three years to support safer communities.

This includes \$235 million in justice and public safety programs for people to get timely access to justice, a new program to fight vandalism and other property crime, increased police funding and more police officer training seats.

Budget 2025 provides additional funding to expand HEART and HEARTH programs to help more people living outdoors access housing and better support services so that the Province can work with communities to help people move indoors and close down encampments.

“We can’t leave our future to the whims of unpredictable forces beyond our borders,” Bailey said. “This is our opportunity to stand up for B.C. families, workers and communities to build a stable and sustainable economy for years to come.”

Budget 2025 presents declining deficits from \$10.9 billion in 2025-26 to \$10.2 billion in 2026-27 and \$9.9 billion in 2027-28.

Six backgrounders follow.

**Learn More:**

Read the 2025 Budget and Fiscal Plan: <https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/>

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