



# Jonathan Wilkinson

NORTH VANCOUVER'S MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

March 16, 2018

## Protecting North Vancouver's backyard

To what degree does the expansion of the Kinder Morgan pipeline increase the risk of an oil spill in North Vancouver's backyard - Burrard Inlet?

It's a legitimate and vital question.

I'm concerned, however, that thoughtful discussion about it is being clouded by a muddle of misinformation.

Here's an example.

A number of advocacy organizations have made the claim that the TransMountain expansion would "make an oil spill in the Pacific Ocean all but inevitable" and "all but guaranteed" but have offered little to substantiate these claims.

I raise this not to engage in the on-line tit-for-tat of "expert opinion" that tends to masquerade as informed and thoughtful debate, but to point out the challenges we encounter while attempting to inform ourselves of the facts and form our own opinions on the relative risks and benefits here.

One thing is certain – there is no such thing as "zero" risk. Never has. Never will be. On pipelines or anything else in life.

That's why objective risk analysis is so critical here – the kind of clear-headed assessment that cuts through the social media distortion that is shaping the reality tunnel of some on this issue.

### Some facts

Oil has been transported through the existing pipeline and through the Port of Vancouver for over 60 years – and diluted bitumen through this same pipeline for approximately 30 years.

The difference with the expansion of the current pipeline is not the type of product that will be shipped. Rather, it's that the number of tankers using the harbor will increase from one to approximately six per week.

Let's put that number in context. There are currently 3,100 large vessels plying through the Port of Vancouver each year. They account for a total of 120,000 vessel movements annually - entering and leaving the port every day picking up or delivering goods like grain, heavy machinery, and lumber – as well as oil.

Additional risk posed by a six-fold increase in tanker traffic is being mitigated on the other side of the ledger by an unprecedented increase in spill prevention and response capabilities – through the 157 binding conditions imposed when approval

was recommended and through the government's \$1.5 billion Ocean Protection Plan.

For example, Kinder Morgan must provide enhanced tanker escort using tethered and un-tethered tugboats beyond the Lions Gate Bridge into the Strait of Juan de Fuca to Canada's 12 nautical mile limit. New, larger vessels are being purchased for this purpose as tugs of this size are not currently available on the West Coast.

New radar sites will be installed along our coasts and the Coast Guard will have enhanced 24/7 emergency management capacity (including the recently re-opened Kitsilano Base).

The Coast Guard will be leasing two new vessels with the ability to tow large commercial ships, including tankers.

The industry-funded Western Canada Marine Response Corporation is investing \$150 million in enhancements to respond to increased tanker traffic - doubling capacity and halving response time, adding six new bases, 120 new employees, 43 new vessels and response resources along the shipping route.

### Much more than economics

When it comes to the TransMountain pipeline expansion project, the economic benefits are clear. Over the first 20 years of expanded operations, combined government revenues from the project are estimated to be \$46.7 billion.

These funds will help pay for hospitals and schools and the development of future technologies needed to shift Canada to a low carbon future. Of this total, B.C. itself would see \$5.7 billion in direct government revenues. Further, the pipeline expansion will spur economic activity and create thousands of well-paying jobs in B.C. and Alberta.

However, in taking the decision to approve the TransMountain Pipeline Expansion our government reflected carefully on issues related to protecting our coast.

We have developed a comprehensive plan for addressing these concerns – a plan that will not only ensure the safe shipment of product from this project but a plan that will improve the safety of all shipping through the Port of Vancouver.

Taken together, these measures will ensure our oceans and coastal communities remain healthy, clean, and safe for generations to come.

## CONTACT INFO:

CONSTITUENCY OFFICE: 102 West 3rd Street, North Vancouver  
 EMAIL: [Jonathan.Wilkinson@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Jonathan.Wilkinson@parl.gc.ca) | TEL: 604-775-6333