

Dear Sirs/Mesdames,

I write as a concerned member of the legal community and a patron of the Law Courts Inn. I am a lawyer in Vancouver, and my fiancé and I were planning to have our wedding at the venue next spring.

I was very disappointed to hear that the Province is not planning to renew the lease for the Law Courts Inn and is instead planning to repurpose the space for non-judicial offices.

My fiancé and I were surprised and disappointed to hear that the Province intends to repurpose a beautiful, functional space which has been used by individuals and organizations in the community for four decades, for use as non-judicial offices – and with so little notice to the Law Courts Inn. As noted above, we had planned on and were excited to use the space for our wedding. The Province's decision means we will have to make alternative arrangements. Given the pent up demand for venues caused by COVID-19, we are not optimistic that we will be able to proceed as scheduled.

As a lawyer, I was surprised and concerned to hear that the Province exercises this type of management over the courthouse premises. The courthouse is the heart of the legal community in the Province. For the Province to decide how the space within it will be used, including for non-judicial purposes, and with little or no consultation, calls into question the independence of the judiciary.

Finally, I find it very difficult to understand how the Province cannot find alternative office space given what will no doubt be devastating effects of COVID-19 on commercial landlords and tenants.

Accordingly, I hope that the Province will reconsider its decision.

DAVID PENNER

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