

Families for School Seismic Safety Pleased With Minister Owen's Commitment

In his first meeting as Minister of Public Works, Federal Minister Stephen Owen met today with FSSS (Families for School Seismic Safety) and APEG (Association of professional engineers and geoscientists.)

The Minister made very strong commitments concerning the willingness of the Federal government to commit a variety of funding to solving the urgent problem of school seismic safety.

Initially, the Minister fully expects that funding for the first phase of a research project proposed jointly by UBC and APEG will flow in January. The results of this research would be announced at the World Conference on Earthquake Engineering to be held next August in Vancouver.

Minister Owen stated that he saw this as "an opportunity to show case Vancouver as not just an epicenter of seismic risk, but as an epicenter of science, innovation and action".

As Families for School Seismic Safety, we are extremely pleased with what the Minister has told us today. We feel confident from the Minister's positive statements today that a solution of this serious problem will soon be at hand and that the Minister will take a personal role in identifying the necessary funding support required from all levels of government for the complete upgrade process.

We hope that our Provincial government will also seize the opportunity to develop an innovative new partnership with our Federal government to make the schools of BC safe for our children.