

**Subject: A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST**

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**To:** <fonvca@fonvca.org>, "Mayor and Council - DNV" <Council@dnv.org>, "Senior Management Committee" <managecomm@dnv.org>

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR ALL CANDIDATES FOR THE UPCOMING MUNICIPAL ELECTION:

On page A 28, of the Vancouver Province Wednesday Sept. 28, there is a story by Don Harrison titled

"TAX-CREDIT PROPOSAL FOR KIDS SPORTS GAINS SUPPORT".

My name is mentioned as one of the pioneers of this idea. The proposal was actually made by me several times in the past and was submitted to the UBCM Convention many years ago and on more than one occasion. Since then I made several additional proposals through Council. The latest was a year ago when I was on a CBC and CKNW talk show and when I made yet another motion on District Council that we ask the Minister of Health to endorse that concept and make the necessary arrangements. My proposal goes far beyond what is told in the story.

The idea is relatively simple.

40% of all visits to members of the medical profession result from stress and stress related symptoms. On the other hand for every dollar invested in preventive health care via supervised exercising programs we save 7 dollars in actual health care costs. This constitutes an investment of 700 % and takes place at a time when our health care system is overloaded and in danger of collapsing.


The idea is simply that when a doctor realises that a patient suffers from a stress related illness, rather than administering medication, he suggests that the patient go and visit one of our public recreation facilities and exercise under the supervision of trained personnel. The facilities and the personnel are already in place. All our public recreation facilities are subsidised by the District via municipal taxes. The amount in the District is \$ 6 million per annum. The Recreation Commission comes under the jurisdiction of both the District and the City. In addition to the direct subsidy, the Commission pays no taxes and keeps all the fees from clients.

The idea is that fees for programs are tax deductible. This is irrespective as to whether a client is referred to a facility by a member of the medical profession or does so on his/her own volition.

This is the idea, I put forward many times but with only limited success. The reason, at least partially, is that both the medical profession and sections of the bureaucracies involved are not interested in people being healthy since our whole system is based on the profit motive. Nonetheless, it is an idea whose time has come. The idea should be pushed to the maximum. Our Health Care system is on the line. There are many people who support this concept including doctors of course. Not all people are corrupt.

There should be no direct cost attached to exercising which saves money for society and makes people feel better.

Ernie Crist

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