

north shore news

LETTER: 'Chirping grasshoppers' deserve our respect

North Shore News

February 11, 2015 10:27 AM

Dear Editor:

Re: [Silence the Chirping Over Double Dipping \(http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/letters/letter-silence-the-chirping-over-double-dipping-1.1730100\)](http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/letters/letter-silence-the-chirping-over-double-dipping-1.1730100), Jan. 14 Mailbox:

In response to the somewhat denigrating missive by (letter-writer Nick) Bryant about the concern over the practice of double dipping, I would like to point out that there are extra costs associated with the dubious double-dipping practice.

Almost all cases of double dipping occur in the public sector. Rarely do we see incidents of double dipping in the private sector.

Why is that? Because normal, effective and economical management practice is to train replacements for most positions.

In particular, the president of a company, would be severely castigated if succession planning was not in effect for all positions inclusive of his own.

The shareholders would ensure adherence to succession planning. There must always be a replacement trained and capable of being upwardly mobile. Therefore the practice of doubling dipping has a negative impact. It denies promotional opportunities. Another negative impact is that double dipping denies the opportunity for additional (new job) employment.

Nobody in their right mind is saying that people do not deserve a pension . . . to spend as they wish.

However, to quote Mr. Bryant . . . "the envious 'grasshoppers' that continue to chirp away claiming that money from the public purse is being misspent need to get over it and give it a rest."

Money is being misspent. Perhaps not in the way some people view DD, but give some thought to why DD is firmly entrenched in the public sector. The private sector have analysts and shareholders who devour financial data that could affect their investments.

The grasshoppers do not have enough access to the \$\$\$ involved. We taxpayers are the shareholders in government. But we do not get the true costs made available as to the legacy costs related to public sector employees.

I would go further and ask why Mr. Bryant does not question why the operating costs for school boards on the North Shore are among the highest in the province.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the biggest double-dipping incident in recent British Columbia history.

Not so long ago, (retired legislature clerk) George Macminn successfully negotiated a double dip at the age of 82 years. He had not trained a replacement (and was paid) \$500,000 for a two-year consulting contract. When it was leaked, he employed a skilled lawyer and was advised (to arrange in his will) to donate the \$500,000.

My final point to Mr. Bryant: instead of making derogatory comments about the grasshoppers, we should be complimenting them — they took the time to outline their concerns which makes them participants in how our community and province is managed, as opposed to the multitude of voters who are just spectators.

Harry Mayor
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