

## LETTER: Leave housing controls to senior levels of government

North Shore News

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Dear Editor:

Re: [West Van Floats Non-resident Tax Plan \(http://www.nsnews.com/news/west-vancouver-floats-non-resident-tax-plan-1.2360334\)](http://www.nsnews.com/news/west-vancouver-floats-non-resident-tax-plan-1.2360334), Oct. 7 front-page story.

District of West Vancouver council is really on to something. Their target is people who use real estate as an investment. So, that covers about 80 to 90 per cent of homeowners as a guess.

And now we have reverse logic since homeowners would have to tick a box stating the home is their principal residence. That's what we do now when we apply for the homeowner's grants in their various forms on lower value homes. That grant already gives preferential treatment to those who live in their principal residence. And, for homes of greater value the province has dealt with that. So why another tax beyond a money grab?

Then there is this brilliant insight – "It is not unheard of for people to own several multimillion-dollar homes, sometimes not living in any of them." Given that those homes become investment properties the senior governments will assess capital gains taxes on them when they are sold. The feds dealt with the tracking of those gains this week, or wasn't West Van council paying attention?

Municipalities need to learn to deal with municipal problems and stop puttering around in federal and provincial jurisdictions. Both senior levels of government have done enough interfering in the housing market (some good, some bad) to last us through what we all hope is a soft landing for an inflated market. Maybe start looking at some of the bureaucratic regulations that have helped run the cost of homes up.

**Bill Richardson**  
**West Vancouver**

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