



## NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Vancouver, BC

Day 2

May 3, 2023

### EVIDENCE

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**Witness 8: James Jones**

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**Stephen Price**

We have with us now Mr. James Jones.

**James Jones**

Yes, sir.

**Stephen Price**

Mr. Jones, you're going to be giving some testimony today about personal effects. Will you tell us the truth, the whole truth, and nothing about the truth?

**James Jones**

Yes, sir.

**Stephen Price**

Mr. Jones, I understand that you're here today because of the impact effectively on your family and, more particularly, on your wife of the mandates. Is that correct?

**James Jones**

Yes, sir.

**Stephen Price**

Can you give me a bit of a history about yourself and your family life as it was?

**James Jones**

Yeah, I live on Vancouver Island in Victoria; I came there about 13 years ago or so. I met my wife probably seven years ago. We started hanging out. We were friends at first and kind of got to know one another, and over the course of our relationship, it led to a marriage. So we were married probably about four or four and a half years ago. She was a BC Transit worker. She'd been so ever since I'd known her. Before, she worked for BC Transit in Victoria for about 13 years. So yeah, I met her as a transit worker through another transit worker who was a mutual friend. That's how we developed our relationship.

**Stephen Price**

You're using the past tense when you refer to your wife.

**James Jones**

Yes, sir. She passed away. She was mandated to take the COVID shot. We were looking at potentially having a child. I was 40 and she was 38. So it was kind of towards the later time of what we would really have to make that decision. It was something we talked about for a couple of years, and she was open to the concept, but she was more the holdout in it. I thought she would make a beautiful mother, just like she was a beautiful wife to me.

She was mandated to take the shot. She was concerned perhaps about— Because there wasn't a lot of information about it concerning how it might affect a pregnancy; or how it might affect to take it and then to get pregnant, soon after having taken it, and that kind of thing; or how it might affect the term of the pregnancy. We knew another woman who was pregnant who took the shot, and she had a miscarriage relatively shortly after. And there was a gentleman who she worked with who also took it because they were mandated. From what she told me, that gentleman had a serious heart issue having to do with, what they believed, was related to the shot.

So at that point, she was really against it. She was really hesitant to do so. And she felt that there wasn't enough information concerning it. Treating it like a one-size-fits-all solution was something she wasn't supportive of. So she endeavored to try to achieve informed consent through her workplace because from what I understand, BC Transit was not provincially mandated to enforce the vaccine mandates. They privately chose to engage in the mandates themselves for their employees.

And so through the course of it all, through trying to search for solutions and answers to all of this— My wife was a bus driver, and at the time, I had left a job. I actually took a night shift job so that I would be able to listen to various different scientists and people who were experts who were discussing this: listen to both sides of the argument kind of thing as much as possible, the kind of pro-vaccine side and the people who also maybe had seen some of the early safety signals concerning it. Because I was trying to either put her at ease and try to find, like to think that this might be something that would be safe to do, or to say, yeah, this is definitely something we shouldn't move ahead with.

So over the course of about six or seven months from when they actually gave the mandate to the point in time when they put the workers off who would not take the shot, it was basically our entire life. Our entire life was trying to research this thing to try to understand whether it would be safe for her to take in her position and also researching what sort of form of exemption a person could look to get concerning the COVID vaccine as well. That was the other thing she attempted to do through her work, she attempted to apply for an exemption to the mandate itself.

## **Stephen Price**

Was she receiving support from her employer, the supervisors, and the other workers in terms of her desire not to have the shot and to investigate it?

## **James Jones**

No, if I may just offer a little bit of information, I think that gives context to it. So my wife was the only person in Victoria, like on the Island, through BC Transit— When new hires come in, there's a bunch of courses that a new BC Transit worker has to go through,

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and one of them is the anti-bullying and anti-harassment training. And my wife was actually the teacher of that course, so she was the only person certified through BC Transit. Because it's important that the transit workers aren't bullying each other and there's not that kind of environment in the workplace and that they're supportive of one another.

But my wife actually received the opposite treatment. She was essentially bullied and coerced and intimidated. She left a 40-page log of the experience she had. And in my opinion, upon reading all of that, which was only available to me posthumously, I didn't know she was writing it—the treatment she received was abhorrent. As opposed to trying to understand her position or provide informed consent or a framework for that to exist, she was instead bullied and coerced from all angles, from colleagues she'd had for years and people within her union and this kind of thing. It's my opinion and upon reading this paperwork that is essentially the experience she had.

November 31st, it was her last day of work. And eleven days later, she took her own life. I was working night shift, so I was asleep. She had told me she was going out before I went to sleep; she had a few things to take care of. I woke up that night, maybe 8 pm or something. I hadn't gone to sleep till late, till two or three or four. I woke up after a couple hours of sleep just to see if she was back and go to the bathroom. She wasn't back. I sent her a text and I just went back to sleep. And in many ways, that's the greatest regret I have in my life because when I woke up later, it was much later, like one or two in the morning. So I went around the house, and I looked for her. I noticed she hadn't even received my text. Normally on the phone, you can see when it pings to their phone and when a person receives your text. She still hadn't even received it, which means she hadn't even looked at her phone. So I tried to look everywhere for her. I couldn't find her.

I messaged her brother to try to see if maybe she'd spoken to them or if they knew where she might be. They live in Gatineau, Quebec. It's three hours later there, so it would have been maybe six or seven a.m. They would have been just getting up. They actually were just as worried about her as I was, so they did a welfare check and the police came by. I let them come in and search the apartment just to show she wasn't there. I didn't know what was going on, and they asked if she had a vehicle and I said, "Yes, I believe it's down in the parkade." So we went down to the parkade.

She was in her vehicle, and she was just lying there in the back seat. I just couldn't understand it. I really couldn't wrap my mind around it on any level. I started trying to shake the vehicle to try to rouse her, to try to get her up. She didn't move or anything. The police asked me if there was a spare set of keys, to run upstairs and grab the keys. I told them to smash the windows in the vehicle, smash out the window and get in there because I'd done emergency response for years before that. And I knew if there was something going on with her that she needed help and she needed it immediately. So they smashed the

back passenger window, and they were unable to get the door open. So I had them smash the front window, and they smashed that too, and then they were able to get into the vehicle. I was a few feet away at the time, but I saw her lying there. They reached for her, I guess they must have grabbed her, she was either cold or something because they told me she's gone. And in that moment, I lost my mind. I don't even know if I've recovered to this day or if I ever will, to tell you the honest truth. I'm sorry.

**Stephen Price**

Thank you, sir. Very hard for you obviously. Were you able to get any help from BC Transit or from her employers as to recover from this?

**James Jones**

No, I mean, it's been difficult for me. Even her union obstructed her, in my opinion. They obstructed her from being able to redress the grievance or whatever. They actually backed the employer when it came to the mandates. So in that sense, she didn't have her union to rely on. She didn't have the employer. She wasn't provided with informed consent. There was no framework for them to provide informed consent. To me, it's not a credible position that anyone within BC Transit—

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I'm sure they're great bus drivers and there are people there that can maintain those buses and they do so confidently. I mean, we can see that because the buses are on the road. And there are people, obviously, who can plan routes and work together, and plan the hours and the scheduling and these things. But the idea that someone within BC Transit would also have the degree of medical training and understanding in vaccinology and biology, that they would be able to provide her with informed consent, is not a credible position to me. So I've always, to this day, I wonder, I want to know who in that corporation signed off on those mandates and what their training was, what education level they had.

And I would also like to know the people through the union who supported it. Same thing, what would be their education level because there was no framework established for informed consent. It was a loose framework where they engaged in bullying and coercion. They believed that the vaccine was important.

At that point in time, it was still being said by people in the medical establishment and in the government that the COVID vaccine was our way out of the pandemic. And they were portraying it as if you got the vaccine, you would not be able to get COVID and you would therefore not be able to spread COVID. So my wife died while that was still the sort of prevalent media perspective and news perspective, the prevalent government and medical establishment perspective. My wife also died a couple of weeks before the Trucker Convoy took place. So it was probably the darkest time in Canada in many ways and definitely, the darkest time in my life.

**Stephen Price**

Thank you, sir.

**James Jones**

Thank you.

**Stephen Price**

I don't know if the commissioners have any questions for you.

**Commissioner Kaikkonen**

I'm truly sorry for your loss, and I'm sure my fellow commissioners feel the same way.

**James Jones**

Thank you.

**Commissioner Kaikkonen**

Can you just tell me what your wife's name was?

**James Jones**

Her name was Sandra. Her birth name was Sandra Veldhousen, and her married name was Sandra Jones.

**Commissioner Kaikkonen**

Thank you very much.

**James Jones**

Thank you.

**Stephen Price**

No further questions. Thank you for taking the time to be here. Obviously, a very emotional impact on you, sir. My condolences.

**James Jones**

Thank you for taking the time to hear me. I appreciate that and thank you for your kind words about my wife. I really respect all of you and thank you for all the good work you're doing here. Thank you.

[00:12:17]

***Final Review and Approval:*** Margaret Phillips, August 25, 2023.

*The evidence offered in this transcript is a true and faithful record of witness testimony given during the National Citizens Inquiry (NCI) hearings. The transcript was prepared by members of a team of volunteers using an "intelligent verbatim" transcription method.*

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