

September 27, 2007

Gary Mar named Alberta Envoy in Washington, D.C.

Edmonton... Former Cabinet Minister Gary Mar has been named to head the Alberta Office in Washington, D.C.

“Alberta will be well served by Gary Mar as our new envoy in Washington, D.C.,” said Premier Ed Stelmach. “Gary brings broad public policy experience, an ability as an accomplished speaker, an in-depth understanding of the U.S. political system, and his enthusiasm to represent the province.”

Mar has served as MLA for Calgary Mackay since 1993, and is a former Minister of Community Development; Education; Environment; Health and Wellness; and International and Intergovernmental Relations. He represented the Premier at the First Minister’s Health Summit in Ottawa in 2004, and headed the *Alberta Week in Washington* program as part of *Alberta at the Smithsonian* in 2006.

“I am excited about serving Albertans in this new way,” said Mar. “I look forward to the challenge of representing Alberta and advancing our province’s interests with decision makers in the capital city of our largest and most important trading partner.”

Mar starts his new position at the end of October, with the exact date to be determined. His salary will be in accordance with Government of Alberta guidelines.

Mar was the successful candidate in a recruitment process that included ads in local and national newspapers. The position became vacant in August when Alberta’s former representative in Washington, D.C., Murray Smith, joined the private sector. The Alberta Office in Washington is co-located in the Canadian Embassy and is geared to representing Alberta’s interests to U.S. policymakers and seeking out opportunities for the province.

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Attachment: Gary Mar biography

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Gary Mar Biography:

Gary Mar was elected to his fourth term as Member of the Legislative Assembly for Calgary-Mackay on November 22, 2004. He was appointed Minister of Community Development on November 25, a position he held until April 2006. He then became Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations and held this position until December 2006. Mr. Mar is currently a member of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Committee, the Members' Services Committee and the Cabinet Policy Committee on Managing Growth Pressures.

In addition to his duties as an MLA and minister, Mr. Mar has also served as a member of the Agenda and Priorities Committee and was the vice-chair of the Standing Policy Committee on Economic Development and Finance. During the 25th Legislature he served as a member of both the Agenda and Priorities Committee and the Standing Policy Committee on Health and Community Living.

Since he was first elected to the Alberta Legislature in 1993, Mr. Mar has served as:

- Minister of Health and Wellness
- Minister of Community Development
- Minister of Education
- Minister of Environment

As Minister of Community Development Mr. Mar implemented the Alberta Seniors' Benefit, which directs government funding to senior citizens with financial need.

As Minister of Education he introduced *First Things First...Our Children*, an initiative that focused on schoolchildren of all ages. It made a commitment to ensure young children can read well by Grade 3. It also focused on high standards for junior and senior high school students, keeping students in school and making sure they have the skills they need when they graduate.

As Minister of Environment Mr. Mar served as co-chair of Climate Change Central, the public/private partnership formed in response to the international agreement on climate change. He also took action because of the public interest and formed a new provincial park in the Spray Valley to protect this mountainous part of Kananaskis Country.

Gary G. Mar was born in Calgary on July 26, 1962. He obtained his bachelor of commerce (finance) at the University of Calgary in 1984 and his bachelor of laws at the University of Alberta in 1987.

From 1987 to 1990, Mr. Mar practised civil and criminal law with MacKimmie Matthews, Barristers and Solicitors, Calgary. Between 1990 and 1992 he practised corporate, commercial and real estate law with Code Hunter, Barristers and Solicitors, Calgary. Mr. Mar subsequently operated his own general law practice in Calgary and contributed to the *Annotated Rules of Court*. Mr. Mar was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1994.

Mr. Mar is an active member of the Chinese community in Calgary. He served as director of the Sien Lok Society from 1987 to 1993 and as vice-president of the Chinatown Development Foundation from 1990 to 1993. The Sien Lok Society is a trustee of Sien Lok Park and a promoter of Chinese culture, while the Chinatown Development Foundation operates an 88-unit low-income housing facility. He has served as a volunteer with Calgary Legal Guidance, which provides legal services to low-income persons.

Mr. Mar and his wife, Nancy, have three children: Lauren, Jared and Mackenzie.

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