

April 29, 2010

Alberta continues to lead on Senate reform

Province extends terms of existing senators-in-waiting

Edmonton... The Government of Alberta is extending the existing terms of Alberta's senators-in-waiting until December 2, 2013 or an earlier time as provided under the Senatorial Selection Act. The six-year terms were originally scheduled to expire this December.

"The decision to extend the terms of our senators-in-waiting allows for and reaffirms the democratic will of Albertans who voted for them," said Premier Ed Stelmach. "Our province has shown leadership in holding Senate elections and continually advocated that the will of the people must be reflected in the Senate."

Alberta expects its next Senate vacancy in December 2011 and with the term extension, the Prime Minister will have a full list of elected Alberta representatives to appoint to the Upper Chamber. The Prime Minister has already appointed one elected senator from Alberta - Bert Brown, and should the recently introduced Bill S-8 become law, the federal government will have confirmed its willingness to appoint senators who have received the democratic support of the people.

"The Senate should play an important role protecting and advocating provincial interests," said Iris Evans, Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations. "Alberta has been a long time supporter of a democratic Senate - one that is elected, equal and effective."

Alberta currently has three elected senators-in-waiting: Betty Unger, Cliff Breitzkreuz, and Link Byfield.

The Government of Alberta has a clear plan for a strong economic recovery. The Way Forward will bring Alberta back into a surplus position in three years by trimming government spending; using cash reserves to protect key programs; continuing to invest in public infrastructure; and ensuring that our province's industries are competitive and continue to attract investment to provide jobs and prosperity.

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