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The Stratton Agreement achieves two important goals of this government: to resolve these cases fairly and reasonably, and to resolve them without subjecting victims to the further trauma of a trial.

- Dave Hancock, Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Stratton Agreement concludes sterilization negotiations

Edmonton A negotiated settlement with Albertas victims of sexual sterilization brings closure to nearly 100 per cent of the cases brought forward to date. The settlement was announced today by Dave Hancock, Minister of Justice and Attorney General. Negotiator and former Justice Joseph Stratton, Q.C., and Plaintiffs Committee members Jon Faulds, Alan Garber and Gary Wanless joined Hancock to make the announcement.

The *Sexual Sterilization Act* became law in Alberta in 1928. The Progressive Conservative Government repealed the legislation shortly after its election in 1971.

The Government of Alberta expresses its profound regret to those who have suffered as a result of being sterilized under this *Act*.

"We are compensating these victims and finding ways to treat these people in a sensitive, fair and equitable manner. We are doing the best we can for all concerned to make things right and to correct, as much as possible, the wrongs of many years ago," said Premier Ralph Klein.

"It is important that this very sad chapter of Alberta history is now closed for the hundreds of victims. The compensation can never fully deal with the trauma suffered by these individuals," said Hancock.

Hancock added, "Justice Stratton and the members of Plaintiffs Committee are to be commended for their hard work and commitment to reaching a settlement. This was a complex and most difficult task, and it is to their credit that they took on the challenge for the good of all concerned. I would also like to congratulate the staff of Alberta Justice who have worked hard and long on bringing resolution to this matter."

"I am pleased that all but a few of these claims have been settled," said the Honourable Joseph Stratton, Q.C., former Justice of the Alberta Court of Appeal. "I attribute that success to the resolve of all parties to the negotiations to reach a fair settlement and I truly believe that has been achieved."

Justice Stratton was retained by Alberta Justice in June 1999 to negotiate with the 38 law firms representing the claimants.

The few remaining claims are expected to be resolved in the near future.

As a result of the agreement, the representative cases that were scheduled to go to court in December have been resolved. The nearly 250 cases settled by the agreement announced today will cost in the range of \$82 million, bringing the total amount paid to claimants to approximately \$142 million.

Attachments:

Settlement details and Statement of Regret

Justice website: <http://www.gov.ab.ca/just>

Contacts:

Dave Hancock - Minister of Justice and Attorney General - (780) 427-2339

Bob Scott - Justice Communications - (780) 427-8530

Settlement details:*

1995/96 - present

Total claims brought forward	958
Claims withdrawn	<u>75</u>
Claims requiring resolution	883

June 1996 - present

Claims settled under Public Trustee, third party negotiation, and the Settlement Panel	635	\$ 60 million
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November 1999

Claims settled under Stratton Agreement	<u>246</u>	<u>\$ 82 million</u>
Total settled to date	881	\$142 million

* These numbers change almost daily as claims are resolved.

Background information:

The *Sexual Sterilization Act* was passed in 1928 and was repealed as one of the first actions of the current government after it was elected in 1971.

More than 600 cases were resolved between January 1996 and June 1999. In June 1999 the Honourable Joseph Stratton Q.C. was retained to negotiate a settlement with a Plaintiffs Committee.

Justice Stratton is a long-standing member of the Alberta Bar and is a former Justice of the Alberta Court of Appeal. Plaintiffs Committee coordinated the negotiations on behalf of 38 law firms, representing a total of close to 250 claimants.

The Stratton Agreement results in:

- Settlement of 248 of the remaining sterilization lawsuits
- Discontinuance of the seventeen representative trials scheduled to start in December 1999.

Other settlements achieved to date:

- Of the total of 958 cases brought forward, about 956 have been achieved to date. The number changes each day as more are resolved. In addition, a few new cases have been brought forward.
 - **In total, about 75 claims were withdrawn or declined because the claim was invalid, or for other reasons.**
 - Fewer than 20 claims remain (including new cases) and are expected to be resolved in the near future.
 - The Settlement Panel, chaired by Gary McPherson, was established in June 1998 to provide claimants with an option other than court. A few cases are still in negotiation and the Settlement Panel remains available to claimants.
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Expression of Regret

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"We are compensating these victims and finding ways to treat these people in a sensitive, fair and equitable manner. We are doing the best we can for all concerned to make things right and to correct, as much as possible, the wrongs of many years ago," said Ralph Klein, Premier.

"It is important that this very sad chapter of Alberta history is now closed for the hundreds of victims. The compensation can never fully deal with the trauma suffered by these individuals," said Dave Hancock, Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

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