



BC FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION
AND PRIVACY
ASSOCIATION

November 20, 2009

The Hon. Gordon Campbell
Premier of British Columbia
PO Box 9041, Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

Dear Premier Campbell:

Re: Statutory Review of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*

I am writing to you regarding the current legislative review of the province's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) – specifically, the government's decision to impose upon the Special Committee a deadline four months shorter than that provided for in the *Act*.

Section 80 of the *Act* requires a review by a special legislative committee every six years, and your government struck such a Special Committee on October 5.

Review of Act

80 (1) At least once every 6 years, a special committee of the Legislative Assembly must begin a comprehensive review of this Act and must submit a report respecting this Act to the Legislative Assembly within one year after the date of the appointment of the special committee.

(2) A report submitted under subsection (1) may include any recommended amendments to this Act or any other Act.

(3) For the purposes of subsection (1), the first 6-year period begins on October 4, 1997.

(Emphasis added)

The past two Special Committees have each taken the full year to get up to speed on the law, solicit submissions, hear from witnesses and prepare their reports. Both committees produced some important and carefully considered recommendations.

We do not see any reason why the current committee and its members should be put in a position where they have only two thirds of the time that was required by their predecessors to do this important work. If you have such a reason, we look forward to hearing it.

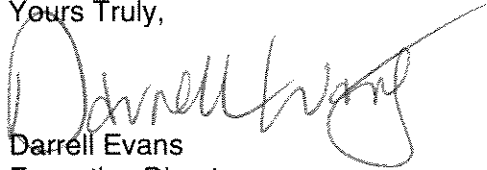
This short deadline will also impair the ability of citizens and public interest groups (who are usually overburdened with their regular workload) to do the necessary research and provide full comment to the Committee. Many of these submissions are prepared by volunteers in their spare time, and your government has tied their hands for no good or even discernible reason.

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We formally request that the government reconsider its decision to truncate the time allotted to the review by the Special Committee. We look forward to your giving the committee the full year to which it is entitled under the law to hear from the public and deliver a valuable and worthwhile report on freedom of information and privacy in this province.

Please feel free to contact us at any time if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours Truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darrell Evans", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Darrell Evans
Executive Director

cc. Mike de Jong, Government House Leader
Ron Cantelon (Chair) Special Committee to Review the Freedom of Information and
Protection of Privacy Act
Doug Routley, Deputy Chair