

NEWS RELEASE

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FIPA celebrates 7th birthday of FOI Request for BC government's \$300 million contract with IBM

Vancouver – The BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association is holding a birthday party for its longest-running FOI request, which turns seven this month. FIPA has been trying since 2004 to get an uncensored copy of the BC government's \$300 million Workplace Services Agreement with IBM, but the government continues to fight against its release.

"This is a special time in the life of an FOI request," said FIPA Executive Director Vincent Gogolek. "The IBM contract has a ten year term, so there is a real chance that this battle could still be going after the contract itself has expired."

The birthday cake will be cut at 10:00 am at the YWCA Hotel, 733 Beatty Street (Canfor Room). We will be joined by **Micheal Vonn**, Policy Director of the BC Civil Liberties Association, and **Jordan Bateman**, BC Director of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation who will help 'celebrate' this milestone.

The government has tried a series of legal gambits to keep the contract secret, and has lost every one of them. It has also been forced to release other contracts, including several Alternative Service Delivery contracts worth \$1.8 billion of taxpayers' money.

FIPA and Information Commissioner Elizabeth Denham have repeatedly called for these contracts to be posted online but the government has consistently failed to do so. So FIPA is doing the government's job (we hope temporarily) by posting the redacted version we have beaten out of the government on our website. You can see it at: http://fipa.bc.ca/library/Government_Contracts/IBM_Workplace_Services.pdf

"Premier Clark made a big splash announcing the Open Info BC website, but after months of waiting no contracts have been posted whatsoever," said Gogolek. "So we put FIPA's vast IT resources to work and managed to do the job in a couple of hours. If the government doesn't have the expertise to do this, FIPA will be happy to share."

"The public has a right to know, and the government has run out of excuses for not releasing this information."

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