



NEWS RELEASE

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Legislative Assembly
Province of British Columbia

Special Committee recommends strengthening B.C.'s access and privacy law

VICTORIA – The Special Committee to Review the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act today released its unanimous report including 39 recommendations to strengthen access to information and privacy protection for British Columbians.

The committee was appointed pursuant to the Act's requirement that a statutory review be carried out by a special committee every six years.

The report summarizes the results of the committee's public consultations where 193 oral presentations and written submissions were received from stakeholders and British Columbians on ways to improve information rights and the collection, use, disclosure, and protection of personal information by public bodies. Major recommendations include enhancing proactive disclosure and adding a duty to document to the Act.

“Our consultations revealed that the digital age provides new opportunities and challenges for freedom of information and privacy protection,” said committee chair Don McRae. “New technologies support more proactive disclosure of government information, but there must also be effective and robust requirements for responding to access requests and protecting personal information.”

“Access to information and privacy protection are important to British Columbians, and we need to maintain a strong and up to date legal framework,” added deputy chair Doug Routley. “The committee thanks all those who participated in the public consultations, and for their important contributions to the committee's conclusions and recommendations.”

Adopted in 1992, the Act provides British Columbians with access to records of public bodies and governs how public bodies collect, use, disclose, and protect personal information in their custody or control.

The committee's report is available at: <https://www.leg.bc.ca/parliamentary-business/committees/40thparliament-5thsession-foi>

The all-party Special Committee includes the following members:

Don McRae, MLA (Comox Valley), chair;
Doug Routley, MLA (Nanaimo-North Cowichan), deputy chair;
Kathy Corrigan, MLA (Burnaby-Deer Lake);
David Eby, MLA (Vancouver-Point Grey);
Eric Foster, MLA (Vernon-Monashee);

Sam Sullivan, MLA (Vancouver-False Creek);
Jackie Tegart, MLA (Fraser-Nicola);
John Yap, MLA (Richmond-Steveston).

For further information:

Susan Sourial Telephone: 250 356-2933 Clerk Assistant, Committees and Interparliamentary Relations

Toll-free: 1 877 428-8337

Room 224, Parliament Buildings Fax: 250 356-8172 Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4 Email:

FOICommitte@leg.bc.ca