

MEDIA RELEASE

November 26, 2019

Special Committee Recommends Conflict of Interest Commissioner

VICTORIA- The Special Committee to Appoint a Conflict of Interest Commissioner has unanimously recommended that Hon. Victoria Gray, Q.C., be appointed as Conflict of Interest Commissioner. The committee's recommendation is included in a report released today.

"The committee was impressed by Ms. Gray's commitment to ethical behaviour, integrity, public service and justice, and her approaches to relationship-building and decision-making," said committee chair Ronna-Rae Leonard. "They also appreciated her understanding of the importance of the position to public confidence in elected officials and our democratic institutions."

"Combined with her extensive legal and professional background and experience, and her demonstrated leadership in community service, committee members are confident that she will serve all Members, the Legislative Assembly and the province well," added deputy chair Steve Thomson.

Former Conflict of Interest Commissioner, Paul D.K. Fraser, Q.C., passed away in March. The special committee was appointed in May to select and unanimously recommend the appointment of an individual as Conflict of Interest Commissioner.

"Mr. Fraser served the Legislative Assembly and the province with honour for over 10 years, and his wisdom, guidance and support will be greatly missed," stated committee chair Ronna-Rae Leonard.

The committee also extended their sincere appreciation to Hon. Lynn Smith, Q.C., for her service as acting commissioner over the last several months.

The Conflict of Interest Commissioner is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly responsible for ensuring that Members of the Legislative Assembly fulfill their obligations under the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act* (RSBC 1996, c.287). The appointment is for a term of five years.

The committee's report is available at: www.leg.bc.ca/cmt/coi

A biography follows.

The members of the committee are:

Ronna-Rae Leonard, MLA Courtenay-Comox (chair)
Steve Thomson, MLA Kelowna-Mission (deputy chair)
Coralee Oakes, MLA Cariboo North
Nicholas Simons, MLA Powell River-Sunshine Coast

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Biographical Information – Hon. Victoria Gray, Q.C.

The Hon. Victoria Gray, Q.C., received a Bachelor of Music degree (B.Mus.) from the University of Victoria and a Bachelor of Laws degree (LL.B.) from the University of Toronto. She was appointed to British Columbia's Supreme Court in 2001 and served as a Justice for sixteen years until her retirement in August 2017. Before her appointment as a judge, Ms. Gray practiced law for nineteen years as a commercial litigator in Vancouver. She was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1997. From 1993-1998, while she was practicing law, she was also an Adjunct Professor at the Peter A. Allard School of Law, University of British Columbia, teaching civil litigation. Ms. Gray has served on a number of boards, including the Law Foundation of BC (Chair), YWCA Metro Vancouver (Chair), and West Coast LEAF (Legal Education and Action Fund) Society (Chair). Ms. Gray is also an active musician, recently playing oboe with the Victoria Symphony and Palm Court Light Orchestra.