

ELECTIONS BC

News Release

For Immediate Release

Date: November 17, 2003

Elections BC Releases Report on the Recall Process in British Columbia

Victoria – Chief Electoral Officer Harry Neufeld today submitted a report to the Legislative Assembly on the recall process in British Columbia.

In the course of administering 20 recall petitions, Elections BC became aware of a number of issues with the current recall legislation.

The purpose of the report is to provide legislators with a review of the recall portion of the *Recall and Initiative Act* and to highlight those aspects of the recall process that Elections BC believes must be addressed. The report identifies and examines problems with the Act and provides recommendations that, if implemented, will address these issues effectively.

The report also contains summaries of the recall financing reports for the nine recall campaigns conducted during the current parliament, and describes how recall is used in other countries.

A copy of the report can be found on Elections BC's Web site at www.elections.bc.ca/rpt/reports.htm.

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For more information:

Elections BC

Phone: (250)387-5305 or Toll Free 1-800-661-8683 / Hearing Impaired (TTY) 1-888-456-5448

Location: 333 Quebec Street, Victoria

Email: electionsbcc@gems3.gov.bc.ca

Web site: <http://www.elections.bc.ca/>



ELECTIONS BC
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Chronology

Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the Recall Process in British Columbia

July 1990

Bill 55, the *Referendum Act* receives Royal Assent.

October 1991

The *Referendum Act* first used to put two questions to British Columbia voters in conjunction with the October 17th provincial general election – one regarding initiative, the other, recall. The ballot question regarding recall was: “**Should voters be given the right, by legislation, to vote between elections for the removal of their Member of the Legislative Assembly?**” The question received affirmative support from 81 percent of the valid referendum votes cast.

November 1993

The Select Standing Committee on Parliamentary Reform, Ethical Conduct, Standing Orders and Private Bills submits the *Report on Recall and Initiative* to the Legislative Assembly. The Committee recommends a recall process where a successful petition triggers an immediate recall of the MLA followed by a by-election.

July 1994

Bill 36, the *Recall and Initiative Act*, receives Royal Assent.

February 1995

The *Recall and Initiative Act* and Regulations come into force. The Act was subsequently amended in September 1995 to contain similar financing and communications provisions to those in the *Election Act*.

November 28, 1997

The first recall applications are received by Elections BC. A Member cannot be recalled during the first 18 months after his or her election. A total of eleven recall petitions were issued by Elections BC between December 5, 1997 and May 20, 1999.

May 2001

British Columbia provincial general election is held May 16th, 2001.

October 2002

Bill 59, the *Election Statutes Amendment Act*, amends the *Recall and Initiative Act* to remove spending limits for recall advertising sponsors, remove the requirement to publish recall opinion survey methodology and amend provisions regarding contributions to recall campaigns.

November 18, 2002

Elections BC receives a recall application on the first day that applications could be submitted to Elections BC for Members of the 37th Parliament. A total of 9 recall petitions were issued by Elections BC between November 26, 2002 and April 2, 2003.

June 2, 2003

Deadline for the twentieth recall petition to be submitted to Elections BC. All twenty recall petitions failed.

November 17, 2003

Chief Electoral Officer submits the *Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the Recall Process in British Columbia* to the Legislative Assembly.