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Vellacott Comments on Judicial Advisory Committees

For Immediate Release

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OTTAWA – Media reports continue to feature commentary about Judicial Advisory Committees (JACs). These committees were created in 1988 and are responsible for assessing the qualifications of lawyers who apply for federal judicial appointments.

Maurice Vellacott (MP Saskatoon-Wanuskewin) affirms that, “Canadians want a strong criminal justice system. We promised safer streets and safer communities and Canadians elected us to fulfill that promise.”

Vellacott notes, “Last November (2006), our New Government announced that we would be adding representatives from the law enforcement community to the JACs.”

Vellacott questions, “What do the Liberals have against police officers? What exactly is the problem with putting one law enforcement official on the advisory committee?”

Vellacott emphasizes, “We make no apologies for including competent and professional individuals on these committees.” He further explains, “This positive change broadens the base of stakeholders who will contribute to this discussion and assessment of competence and excellence required for appointment.”

Vellacott expresses confidence that “the JACs will conduct their examination and assessment of candidates with expertise and diligence and will forward recommendations that will permit the Minister of Justice to make judicial appointments in a timely fashion from candidates of merit and legal excellence.”

Vellacott concluded, “Canada’s New Government will continue to appoint judges based on merit and legal excellence with input from a broad range of stakeholders.”

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For further comment, call (613) 992-1899