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## **New law eliminates house arrest for serious crimes**

**For Immediate Release**

**May 31, 2007**

**OTTAWA** – Conservative MP Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon-Wanuskewin) welcomes the Royal Assent of Bill C-9, an Act to amend the Criminal Code (conditional sentence of imprisonment). This new law will limit the use of conditional sentences or ‘house arrest’ for serious crimes.

After being repeatedly stalled by the Liberal Opposition in the House of Commons, Bill C-9 is finally law. The passage of Bill C-9 marks a significant step in Canada’s New Government’s efforts to tackle crime and make our streets and communities safer. This legislation sends the message that people who commit serious, violent crimes will serve their time behind bars, not in the comfort of their homes.

“During the last election, Conservatives promised to crack down on crime in order to protect the safe streets and communities which have long been a defining characteristic of the Canadian way of life. Today marked another step forward for the Government’s crime-fighting agenda,” said Vellacott. “Serious crime will now mean serious time.”

Bill C-9 eliminates the availability of conditional sentences for offences punishable by 10-years or more that qualify as serious personal injury offences (e.g., sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault or sexual assault with a weapon), terrorism offences or criminal organization offences.

Since taking office, Canada's New Government has brought forward 12 justice bills, including legislation to restrict conditional sentences, to better fight alcohol- and drug-impaired driving, to create tougher laws against street racing, and to raise the age of consent from 14 to 16 years to protect youth from adult sexual predators. Despite repeated efforts to move this legislation through the House of Commons, thus far, only three bills have become law, including C-9. Canada's New Government urges the opposition to pass the outstanding pieces of legislation to protect our streets and communities and build a stronger, safer, better Canada.

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**For further comment, call (613) 992-1966 or 297-2249**