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## **Vellacott applauds change to composition of Judicial Advisory Committees**

**For Immediate Release**

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**OTTAWA** – Judicial Advisory Committees (JACs) are responsible for assessing the qualifications of lawyers who apply for federal judicial appointments. Vic Toews, Minister of Justice, is implementing changes to the way the JACs are composed and operate. The Minister is in the process of adding one more representative to each JAC from the law enforcement community. Currently, the JACs have seven members, with representatives from the general public, the judiciary, the Canadian Bar Association, the Law Society in the province or territory, and the provincial or territorial Minister of Justice. These groups will remain represented in the JACs.

Maurice Vellacott (MP Saskatoon-Wanuskewin) says, “These are reasonable, positive changes to the JACs that Canada’s Conservative Government is proud to make. In fact, these are changes that were recommended by the Justice committee last Parliament.”

Vellacott indicates he can’t understand why anyone would criticize broadening the range of input in the consultation process for judicial appointments. Vellacott argues that, “The law enforcement community is a very important aspect of the justice system that has been underrepresented in the consultation process. Their voices are critical in our legal system and we should involve them.”

Some Canadians have asked for broader consultation in the judicial appointment process. Vellacott remarks, “In response, our Justice Minister is taking steps to ensure that the voices of our hardworking police officers are included in the consultation process.”

Previous Justice Ministers have also made changes to the JACs.

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