



April 25, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COMMISSIONER CALLS ON GOVERNMENT TO FIX THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

Victoria—Information and Privacy Commissioner David Loukidelis has today written to the Hon. Olga Ilich, Minister of Labour and Citizens' Services, and called on the government to fix the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* by amending s. 13, which protects advice or recommendations to government. Loukidelis supports changes to the Act found in Bill 25, but today again noted that Bill 25 does not implement the unanimous all-party special committee recommendation to amend s. 13, a recommendation made almost three years ago.

Loukidelis said s. 13(1) “seriously undermines public accountability by allowing public bodies to withhold broad swaths of information” from citizens making freedom of information requests. “The present situation”, he stated, “unacceptably limits government accountability and also prevents individuals from getting access to their own personal information, which the special committee recognized can cause real distress and harm to individuals”. In his letter, the Commissioner called on the government to amend Bill 25 without delay, to “fix the inappropriate balance between access and confidentiality”. He noted that the legislative committee’s report concluded, after extensive public hearings and consultations, that there is a “compelling case, as well as an urgent need” to amend s. 13.

The Commissioner’s letter to the Minister is posted here on the OIPC’s website:
[http://www.oipc.bc.ca/publications/Comm_Public_Comments/F07-31478IlichLetter\(25Apr07\).pdf](http://www.oipc.bc.ca/publications/Comm_Public_Comments/F07-31478IlichLetter(25Apr07).pdf)

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