



January 20, 2009

Mr. Wally Oppal, MLA
Office of the Attorney General
Room 234
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V1X4

VIA FAX: (250) 387-6411

Dear Sir:

RE: Legal Services Society cuts to service

Recent media reports drew to our attention the plan of the Legal Services Society to cut 38 positions, or 16% of its workforce, from its Lower Mainland offices as a result of funding shortfalls.

The B.C. Civil Liberties Association regularly receives requests from individuals seeking summary legal advice on matters outside of our mandate. We frequently refer these people to services that will be directly affected by these planned cuts including Law Line, family law clinics, and other low-barrier legal services offered by LSS.

As a result of our day-to-day experience, we know that any additional cuts to our already decimated legal aid regime in British Columbia will directly and severely impact the most vulnerable populations in B.C. We are particularly concerned about the impact of these cuts on immigrants and refugees, seniors, women and people with disabilities.

We call on you to take immediate steps to restore the necessary funding to maintain LSS services at current levels, and to budget for increases to Legal Aid funding more generally in British Columbia to address the continuing lack of access to justice for low and middle income British Columbians involved in our justice system.

Yours truly,

David Eby
Acting Executive Director

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