



Honourable John van Dongen
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
P.O. Box 9053
STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, B.C.
V8W 9E2

Honourable Tom Christensen
Minister of Children and Family Development
P.O. Box 9057
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Victoria, B.C.
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December 12, 2008

Dear Minister van Dongen and Minister Christensen:

Re: Child Apprehensions in BC Correctional Facilities

I am writing on behalf of the BC Civil Liberties Association to urge the reconsideration of the decision to terminate the mother-child program at the Alouette Correctional Centre for Women (ACCW). The termination of this program resulted in the apprehension of infants from their mothers in violation of the rights of both parents and children. We believe that the decision to deprive incarcerated single mothers of the possibility of residing with their infant children is inconsistent with the values underlying the *BC Child Family and Community Services Act*, the interests reflected in the *UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child*, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

We enclose our position paper on child apprehensions in BC correctional facilities for your review. It sets out the serious harms that flow from denial of mother-child programs in correctional facilities and notes the disproportionate effect on aboriginal women and children. It is our position that the apprehension of infants from incarcerated mothers cannot be justified and we urge the reinstatement of mother-child program at ACCW.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss our position on this important matter.

Yours truly,

Robert Holmes,
President

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Neil Boyd

Thomas Berger, Q.C., O.C.

Robin Blaser

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