



## NEWS RELEASE

British Columbia Civil Liberties Association  
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For immediate release

### **BCCLA joins movement to reverse legal aid cuts**

**Vancouver** – The B.C. Civil Liberties Association joined the Trial Lawyers Association of British Columbia, West Coast Leaf, the Western Canada Society to Access Justice and the Canadian Bar Association in condemning recent cuts to Legal Aid in the province.

“The BCCLA’s advocates talk to people on the phone every day who are desperate for legal assistance,” said David Eby, the acting Executive Director of the BCCLA. “We know that these cuts will hurt the most vulnerable of B.C. citizens: seniors, women, recent immigrants and refugees, and people with disabilities.”

The Legal Services Society, the non-profit organization established by the Provincial Government for the purposes of delivering legal aid in the province, announced cuts last week of 38 positions in the lower mainland, representing 16% of their overall staff.

“Critical services like Law Line provided by LSS actually help save money for the government by ensuring people who represent themselves are prepared for trials or hearings,” noted Eby. “The short-sighted and chronic underfunding of legal aid in B.C. simply leads to higher costs of operating courtrooms and greater backlogs. There is no net saving in underfunding legal aid.”

The B.C. Civil Liberties Association has written a letter to the B.C. Attorney General, Wally Oppal, to request that he intervene to prevent the staffing cuts from going ahead.

#### *MEDIA CONTACTS*

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