

ELECTIONS BC

News Release

For Immediate Release

Date: February 20, 2003

Recall Petition to be issued for the Electoral District of Nelson-Creston

Victoria - Chief Electoral Officer Harry Neufeld today approved an application for a petition to recall Blair Suffredine, MLA for Nelson-Creston. The proponent of the recall campaign is Birthe Wilson-Achtner.

Neufeld said, "The petition will be issued Thursday, February 27, 2003, and at that time, registered canvassers may begin collecting signatures. The petition must be returned to this office no later than April 28, 2003."

In Nelson-Creston, 29,233 voters were registered to vote on May 16, 2001. As a result, 11,695 or more signatures are required on a recall petition. The proponent and the Member are each limited to expenditures of \$32,419.95.

After a petition is returned, Elections BC has 42 days in which to verify the signatures. The Chief Electoral Officer cannot make a final determination as to the success of a recall effort until the financial report of the proponent is reviewed. The financial report must be filed with the Chief Electoral Officer within 28 days after the end of the recall petition period.

In the event of a successful recall, a by-election must be called within 90 days. The recalled Member can run as a candidate in the by-election.

British Columbia is the only jurisdiction in Canada with recall legislation. The *Recall and Initiative Act* received Royal Assent in July of 1994, and was brought into force in February of 1995.

The Act states that if more than 40% of the registered voters, who were eligible to vote for a particular Member when he or she was elected, sign a recall petition within the 60-day canvassing period, and the proponent has complied with the recall financing provisions, that MLA's seat becomes vacant. The Act also sets out rules regarding contributions and expenditures.

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Individuals or organizations, other than the proponent and Member, who intend to sponsor recall advertising during the recall petition period must register with the Chief Electoral Officer. Recall advertising sponsors must file advertising disclosure reports with the Chief Electoral Officer within 28 days after the recall petition period.

The *Recall and Initiative Act* is administered by the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer. Elections BC is a non-partisan Office of the Legislature, and is responsible for the impartial administration of provincial elections and referendums, recalls and initiatives, voter registration and voter education.

PROPONENT'S OPINION OF WHY THE RECALL OF THE MEMBER IS WARRANTED:

Nelson-Creston MLA Blair Suffredine has neither heard nor represented his constituents and must be recalled.

NOTE: THIS STATEMENT HAS NOT BEEN EDITED OR ALTERED IN ANY WAY BY ELECTIONS BC.

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For more information:

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