



Date: Monday November 25, 2008

**Event: Announcement of Municipal Grants Available from
Civil Forfeiture Proceeds
12 noon, Legislature Reception Hall, Victoria**

Check Against Delivery

- Good morning and thank you for joining us today.
- This morning's announcement is about momentum...
- How we continue, on one hand, to build momentum in taking away cars, cash, property and other tools of organized crime and unlawful activity...
- With nearly 200 files proceeding, involving more than \$20 million in assets.
- And on the other hand, it's about our growing ability to turn the dividends of civil forfeiture into a crime-fighting force in B.C. communities.
- Last February, we made half a million dollars available to local projects focused on crime prevention and remediation, and on helping victims of crime.
- These grants helped diverse projects across the province.
- In Coquitlam, a grant supported B.C.'s first after-hours, mobile drop-in centre and outreach program – the bus you see on the display here.
- It's used to support vulnerable street youth and steer them away from violence, crime and vandalism.
- In Prince George, a two-week program trained youth in violence prevention – so they could, in turn, go out to a dozen smaller local communities and teach their peers.
- In Chilliwack, a shoplifter education and prevention program was established.
- This was to address the fact that more than half the files referred to the local restorative justice program involved shoplifting.

- In East Vancouver, one organization was able to offer cultural programming and mentoring for Aboriginal youth...
- As well as provide an anti-graffiti program and outreach in several high-crime areas.
- And here in Victoria, restorative justice projects have trained facilitators who work with young people, and expanded dispute resolution services to mediate matters like bullying and alcohol offences.
- Given that many of these projects focus on preventing violence and helping victims of violence...
- It's particularly satisfying to be announcing more support for these types of projects on this, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.
- Today, I'm pleased to announce another \$200,000 from civil forfeiture, to support additional, innovative, targeted, local projects.
- Once again, we want to hear from local governments, police departments, community and youth organizations...
- And from school districts, victim service programs, Aboriginal organizations and First Nations bands.
- We're looking for projects that will have an impact at the local level:
- Attacking the root causes of local crime – including “virtual” crimes like cyber-bullying that harm youth...
- Bringing victims and community members into justice processes, through programs like restorative justice...
- Engaging rural and Aboriginal communities...
- And helping to put civil forfeiture proceeds to work in the very communities and regions that those proceeds came from.
- I want to note that this is extra funding for extra projects...
- Over and above all the excellent work done by more than 150 police- and community-based victim service programs we fund.
- Those programs provide information, referrals, emotional support and practical assistance to victims of crime.
- Each year, they help tens of thousands of new clients across B.C. who've become crime victims.

- And this year, we committed an additional \$17 million over three years to enhance these services.
- What the grant money we're announcing today will do is provide one-time-only support, not only to crime victims, but to preventing crime and victimization.
- The \$200,000 will likely support 10 to 15 more projects worth up to \$20,000 each...
- Building on the benefits of the 27 projects we supported last spring.
- And I want to stress that the growing volume of projects we can support is the direct result of the initiative of our police.
- Their referrals and collaboration with us in putting civil forfeiture to work...
- Is paying real dividends and, hopefully, making their jobs a little easier as we take away the tools of unlawful activity.
- I want to thank everyone from front-line officers to our police leaders for sowing the seeds of civil forfeiture's success, in court and in our communities.
- As I mentioned, we have 197 file referrals involving more than \$20 million in assets proceeding.
- This includes four more homes that Vernon RCMP released details about just yesterday – part of a large grow-op network in the Interior.
- In turn, I want to thank the many local organizations whose creativity, understanding of local issues, and commitment to community safety helps to make the most of these grants.
- Thanks to your efforts, civil forfeiture increasingly leads to civic fortitude.
- We remain committed to strong civil forfeiture legislation, because – in what it takes away, and in what it gives back – it's building stronger and safer communities.
- Thank you very much.