

Subject: Ombudsman

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A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST;

ELIMINATING THE UNDERPINNINGS OF DEMOCRACY.

DEMOCRACY CANNOT WORK AND DOES NOT MEAN ANYTHING UNLESS IT IS ANCHORED IN INSTITUTIONS BOTH ACCESSIBLE TO THE PEOPLE AND EFFECTIVE ON THEIR BEHALF.

WHEN IT COMES TO FIGHTING BACK AGAINST GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACIES, INCOMPETENCE AND INJUSTICE, BRITISH COLUMBIANS HAVE JUST BEEN DEALT ANOTHER BLOW.

The Ombudsman of British Columbia has today released his 2002 Annual Report, which outlines the achievements of his Office for 2002, including the development of implementation of performance measure covering all of its areas.


In the report, Kushner discusses the services his Office provides to the public and the harsh realities of the 35% cut to his budget. He also references the governments privatization and outsourcing initiatives.

"In some cases, the oversight of the Ombudsman has been deliberately removed, as with the New BC Ferry Services" Kushner states. He adds that privatization initiatives undertaken at the same time as service cuts to his budget causes concern that British Columbians may lose the ability to access his Office with complaints involving all authorities under his jurisdiction.

While Kushner's priority remains ensuring every member of the public is treated fairly by public agencies that fall under the authority of his Office, he states," In light of our reduced budget, we will not be able to investigate complaints about some authorities. As a consequence, a level of accountability and an assurance of fairness by those authorities in their dealings with the pubic will be lost".

FIGHT BACK - START BY USING YOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AS A PLATFORM. MAKE YOUR LOCAL POLITICIANS AND INSTITUTIONS WORK FOR YOU. LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS THE MOST ACCESSIBLE AND USING IT ON YOUR BEHALF IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY OF DEFENDING DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS IN THE DEFENSE AGAINST BUREAUCRATIC INJUSTICE AT EVERY LEVEL.

Ernie Crist, Councillor

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