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NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Community and Rural Development
Union of British Columbia Municipalities

ELECTIONS TASK FORCE LAUNCHES CONSULTATION WEBSITE

VICTORIA – The task force dedicated to reviewing issues related to B.C.’s local government electoral process has a new website to provide information on the existing system and collect written comments from the public.

Co-chairs Bill Bennett, Minister of Community and Rural Development, and Harry Nyce, president of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), announced the launch of the Local Government Elections Task Force website, www.localelectionstaskforce.gov.bc.ca, as a key component of its consultation process.

“This website provides valuable information on the issues under review and gives every citizen in every part of our province a way to voice their opinion,” said Bennett. “Local government is an important part of our democratic system; it shapes every community and impacts every taxpayer. We want to hear people’s ideas for improving the way local government and school trustee elections take place.”

“The task force invites input from local governments, citizens, community groups and other organizations,” said Nyce. “Given the timeline we are working under, the feedback provided through the website will play a vital role in the deliberations of the task force.”

On Oct. 2, 2009, Premier Gordon Campbell announced the special joint task force, co-chaired by Bennett and Nyce, to make recommendations for changes to local government elections legislation. Other task force members are Surrey Councillor Barbara Steele, first vice-president, UBCM; Quesnel Mayor Mary Sjostrom, third vice-president, UBCM; Donna Barnett, Cariboo-Chilcotin MLA; and Douglas Horne, Coquitlam-Burke Mountain MLA.

The task force is reviewing specific issues related to various local government elections topics:

- Campaign finance, including contribution/spending disclosure and limits, and tax credits.
- Enforcement processes and outcomes.
- The role of B.C.’s chief electoral officer in local government elections.
- The election cycle (term of office).
- Corporate vote.
- Other agreed upon matters (for example, matters raised in UBCM resolutions such as candidate eligibility of volunteers).

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Written input is sought as soon as possible, preferably by April 15, 2010.

The recommendations of the task force are to be presented to the Province and UBCM no later than May 30, 2010, in time for approved legislative changes to be implemented for the 2011 local government elections.

Comments can be provided:

Online at www.localelectionstaskforce.gov.bc.ca.

By email to localelectionstaskforce@gov.bc.ca.

By fax to 250 387-7972

By mail to:

Local Government Elections Task Force
c/o Ministry of Community and Rural Development
PO Box 9839 Stn Prov Govt.
Victoria BC V8W 9T1

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Media	Public Affairs Bureau	Paul Taylor
Contact:	Ministry of Community and Rural Development	Relationships and Communications Advisor UBCM
	250 387-4089	250 356-2938

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