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HOUSE OF COMMONS
CANADA

Maurice Vellacott, MP
Saskatoon-Wanuskewin

Vellacott celebrates National Child Day with announcement of Equal Parenting bill

For Immediate Release

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OTTAWA – “Today is National Child Day. It is a great day to be talking about the best interests of children,” says Conservative MP Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon-Wanuskewin). “My next initiative – in an 11-year political history of fighting for Canada’s children – is a bill to require a presumption of equal, shared parenting in child custody decisions.”

In the last Parliament, Vellacott introduced M-483, a Private Member’s MOTION advocating equal, shared parenting. In this parliament, he is preparing to introduce a Private Member’s BILL that would amend the Divorce Act to direct judges to demonstrate a presumption of equal, shared parenting in cases of marital breakdown where children are involved. Exceptions will exist for cases of abuse and neglect.

“The overwhelming testimony from the best research is that children’s interests are best served when they are raised by both parents,” said Vellacott.

“In cases of marital breakdown, this must be facilitated with greater emphasis being given to equal, shared parenting by Canadian courts when they decide on custodial and access questions,” he added.

A 1998 Canadian Special Joint House-Senate Committee on Child Custody and Access produced a report entitled “For The Sake of the Children.” This report had important recommendations on equal, shared parenting. This year is the 10th anniversary of the release of that Report.

Up to now, governments have failed to implement the important child-friendly recommendations from this report. Vellacott gives special recognition to the 10th anniversary by stating his intent to introduce a Private Members’ Bill to implement equal, shared parenting provisions in federal law.

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For further comment, call (613) 992-1966 or 297-2249