

Saskatoon:
Unit 3, 844-51st St. East
Saskatoon, SK S7K 5C7
Tel (306) 975-4725
Toll free (888) 844-8886
Fax (306) 975-4728
vellacott.mp@shawlink.ca



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CANADA

Ottawa:
Suite 610, Justice Bldg.
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Tel (613) 992-1899
Fax (613) 992-3085
Vellacott.M@parl.gc.ca
www.mauricevellacott.ca

Maurice Vellacott, MP
Saskatoon-Wanuskewin

The same old Liberals are still blocking accountability

— Toughest anti-corruption legislation in history stalled in Liberal Senate —

For Immediate Release

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OTTAWA – On Friday Treasury Board President John Baird called on the Liberals to stop blocking the passage of the Federal Accountability Act (FAA). Speaking in London at the campaign headquarters of Conservative Candidate Dianne Haskett, Minister Baird noted that November 4 is a momentous day for Canadians. Saturday, November 4, 2006 is the one-year anniversary of the day then-Opposition Leader Stephen Harper promised real accountability legislation after a year that was marked by Liberal scandal and corruption.

On January 23rd, Canadians defeated the Liberals on the issue of accountability and elected Prime Minister Stephen Harper to change the way business is done in Ottawa. Canada's New Government acted quickly by making the Federal Accountability Act the first piece of legislation introduced in the new Parliament.

The FAA is the toughest anti-corruption legislation in Canadian history. Once passed, this new law will:

- Ban political contributions by corporations and unions;
- Reduce personal political donations from \$5,000 to \$1,000 per year;
- Strengthen the power for the Auditor General to “Follow the Money” so Parliament and Canadians can more effectively hold the government to account;
- Introduce stricter rules for lobbyists;
- Change access to information legislation to promote a culture of openness and accessibility; and
- Provide real protection for whistleblowers.

Approved with multi-party support in the House of Commons, the toughest anti-corruption legislation in Canadian history has been stalled in the unelected, Liberal-dominated Senate for 135 days – twice the time required for passage in the House. Even worse, Liberal Senators have promised over 100 amendments that would remove any teeth from the FAA, and even talk of delaying implementation until 2008 – long after the Liberal leadership race has wrapped up.

Canadians sent the Liberal Party a clear message in the last election: clean up your act. Instead of learning from this rebuke, the same old Liberals are now playing games and stubbornly refuse to bring accountability to Ottawa. It's time for the Liberals to stop hiding behind unelected, unaccountable Senators and start supporting Canada's New Government in its quest to restore accountability to the Federal government.

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