

## OFFICE OF THE SENATE ETHICS OFFICER

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# News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### SENATE PUBLIC REGISTRY NOW OPEN FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION

Ottawa, May 9, 2006 – Jean T. Fournier, the Senate Ethics Officer, announced today that all Senators are in compliance with the new *Conflict of Interest Code for Senators*. Their declarations are available for public inspection in the Senate Public Registry.

The Registry covers the period of August 2005 to April 30, 2006 and contains the annual public disclosure summaries of each of the 97 Senators who held office on January 1, 2006 and who still do.

“Public disclosure is at the heart of the rules on conflict of interest for Senators”, said Mr. Fournier. “In my view, this first year has already resulted in significant achievements and I believe that the Senate public disclosure process will prove to be beneficial in increasing transparency and accountability in the Senate and thereby enhancing public confidence and trust in the Senate and its work.”

The major responsibility of the Ethics Officer is to advise Senators on how to meet their obligations under the Code in order to prevent, in advance, any ethical problems from arising.

“Over the last year, I personally provided advice on literally hundreds of occasions, to Senators regarding their obligations under the new Code - covering gifts, travel, outside activities, contracts, financial and other interests, disclosure requirements and compliance measures.”

“I am thankful to all Senators who have demonstrated confidence in the work of my Office, respecting my independence and the independence of my Office. I regard that independence as indispensable for the public respect which is essential to the Office’s proper functioning.”

“In completing this first annual review of Senators’ obligations under the Code” said Mr. Fournier, “I was guided by a number of simple and common sense rules of conduct, rooted in the Code itself and in some 38 years of government experience. Senators occupy positions of trust. In the conduct of their parliamentary duties, their first obligation is to serve the public interest. Like other public officials, Senators may not use their position of influence for personal gain or to obtain or appear to obtain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.”

In order to remain in compliance with the Code, Senators must continue to disclose to the Senate Ethics Officer any material changes within 60 days of a change occurring. Moreover, each Senator’s compliance arrangements will be reviewed in the next annual review (2006-2007), which will begin in the fall of 2006.

Mr. Fournier was appointed for a seven-year term under the provisions of the *Parliament of Canada Act* in 2005.

The Registry is located at the Office of the Senate Ethics Officer, 90 Sparks Street, Room 526, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5B4 (tel. (613) 947-3566; fax (613) 947-3577).

Further information on the Senate Code, the legislation and the Office can be found at: <http://sen.parl.gc.ca/seo-cse>

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