

OFFICE OF THE SENATE ETHICS OFFICER

News Release

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SENATE ETHICS OFFICER REPORTS SUCCESSFUL FIRST YEAR

Ottawa, June 20, 2006 – The first Annual Report of the Senate Ethics officer, Mr. Jean T. Fournier, was tabled in the Senate today. It covers the period from April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006.

The Report outlines the major activities and achievements of the office in its first year of operation since the adoption of the *Conflict of Interest Code for Senators* on May 18, 2005. These include the completion of the initial review of the senators' confidential disclosure statements, as well as the opening, last month, of the Senate Public Registry containing the annual public disclosure summaries for each of the 97 senators who held office on January 1, 2006 and who still do. The next annual review of these statements is set to begin this fall. "All senators are in compliance with the Code," said Mr. Fournier. "I am pleased that the office was able to meet all of its objectives, in a timely manner, particularly given the additional work involved in the establishment of a new office over and above its day to day functions."

"Senators occupy positions of trust and their first obligation is to serve the public interest. A culture of integrity starts with full disclosure and the public sharing of all pertinent information", said Mr. Fournier. "I believe the disclosure process we have put in place this year will prove to be beneficial in increasing transparency and accountability in the Senate, thereby enhancing public confidence and trust in the Senate and its work. I appreciate the cooperation I received from senators and their offices and I look forward to continue working with them in upholding the highest standards in the Senate, constantly striving to improve on the new rules of conduct."

In addition to a description of the activities of the office for this year, the Report explains the mandate of the Senate Ethics Officer and some of the key aspects of his position that protect his independence and that of the office. It also provides a description of the conflict of interest rules that apply to senators and provides an indication of the office's priorities for its second year.

The Annual Report is available on the office website at the following address: <http://www.sen.parl.gc.ca/seo-cse>. Printed copies can be obtained from the Office of the Senate Ethics Officer.

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