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INFORMATION &
PRIVACY COMMISSIONER
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News Release

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Statement from Information and Privacy Commissioner on
Right to Know Week

VICTORIA—BC Information and Privacy Commissioner Michael McEvoy released the following statement in recognition of Right to Know Week, Sept. 24 to 28, 2018:

"I join my colleagues around the world in celebrating Right to Know Week, an important reminder of the public's right to access government records and the essential role access to information plays in our democracy," says McEvoy.

"This year also marks the 25th anniversary of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) in BC. Much has changed since 1993 when government was a paper based system and technology like e-mail was only emerging. Today's administrations operate almost exclusively on digital platforms. The laws must keep up with these changes if public bodies are to be held accountable.

"FIPPA was considered cutting edge legislation when unanimously passed in 1993. However, government resourcing, various amendments and court challenges to the legislation have diminished the information rights of individuals.

"As a result, significant upgrades to FIPPA are needed, such as making it an offence to wilfully destroy government records that should be retained, making it an offence to snoop on the personal information of citizens held by government, instituting a duty document key decisions, and mandatory breach notification when individuals could be significantly harmed.

"My office is working with government to address these gaps. I will continue to advocate for these and other amendments that further strengthen the information rights of British Columbians.

"As we take the time this week to celebrate the Right to Know, it's important to celebrate how far we've come and put a focus on where we still need to go."

Media Contact
Michelle Mitchell
Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for BC
250 217-7872 | mmitchell@oipc.bc.ca
Twitter: @BCInfoPrivacy