

**For immediate release
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Statement from BC Information and Privacy Commissioner regarding Special Committee's recommended changes to the *Personal Information Protection Act*

VICTORIA—Information and Privacy Commissioner Michael McEvoy issued the following statement in response to the final report of the Special Committee to Review the *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA):

“I am strongly encouraged by the work of the Special Committee to Review the *Personal Information Protection Act*. They chart a way forward to strengthen the protection of the public’s personal information while fostering innovation on the part of BC business in this increasingly technology driven world.”

The *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA), BC’s private sector privacy legislation, governs how organizations can collect, use, and disclose personal information. It also requires organizations to protect and secure personal information against unauthorized use or disclosure and grants individuals the right to access their own personal information. Every six years, a Special Committee undertakes a comprehensive review of the Act to determine the effectiveness of the legislation in the current social and economic environment.

“I could not agree more with the Committee’s emphasis on the need to align BC’s legislation with the changing federal, provincial and international privacy regimes, including the European Union’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This consistency will make for more meaningful enforcement of citizen privacy rights while providing a more seamless set of rules for businesses.

“The Special Committee’s recommendation of mandatory breach notification for the private sector is especially important now as modern technologies and business practices facilitate the compilation of ever-increasing amounts of often very sensitive personal information about us.”

The Special Committee, first appointed on February 18, 2020, studied the legislation and considered public submissions to identify the changes needed to ensure PIPA is fit for purpose. It has been an especially appropriate time to review this legislation. Today, rapidly evolving technologies enable the collection of ever greater amounts of personal information, more sophisticated profiling of individuals, indiscriminate sharing of personal information, and storage of massive amounts of our personal information

“It is of note that the Special Committee has recognized the importance of providing the Information and Privacy Commissioner with the power to levy administrative monetary penalties against organizations found to be in violation of PIPA. Together with their recommendations that my Office have the enhanced ability to conduct audits to identify and investigate systemic issues and issue findings and orders, this recommendation will ensure greater compliance with the Act and better citizen protection.

“I also applaud the Committee for underscoring the importance of meaningful consent in their recommendations, to ensure that individuals understand how organizations are collecting, using, and disclosing their personal information and that sensitive information, such as biometric data and information about children and youth, has explicit protections.

“The Committee’s work has come at a critical time when technology and its impact on citizens are accelerating dramatically. I would like to thank the Committee for their work; both the far-sighted nature of the analysis as well as the direction of the path they lay out for the future. That path, if in general terms is embraced by government, would make BC a global leader in privacy legislation.

“We also thank organizations and members of the public who engaged in this important process.”

The Report of the Special Committee to Review the *Personal Information Protection Act* is available at <https://www.leg.bc.ca/parliamentary-business/committees/42ndparliament-2ndsession-pipa>

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