

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, May 8, 2019, 7:00 to 9:00 PM Alice Mackay Room, Library Square 350 W. Georgia St, Vancouver, BC Unceded Coast Salish Territories

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2018**



# **Table of Contents**

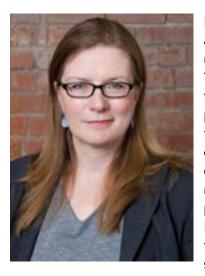
2018 milestones by Catherine Hart, Supporter Relations Manager BCCLA by the numbers ĥ Identification policy and civil liberties by Meghan McDermott, Counsel (Policy) Know your rights: a review of community law in 2018 8-9 by Dylan Mazur, Community Lawyer Access to justice for immigration detainees: Chinna v. Canada by Kate Oja, Counsel (Litigation) Why the BCCLA's struggle for death with dignity matters by Denise Keep, BCCLA Supporter Our new home at BC Artscape Sun Wah by Maggie Knight, Operations Director Our team

15 Financial report



## Letter from the President

Lindsay M. Lyster, Q.C., President



In 2015, our board adopted the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and publicly apologised for our inaction to confront the horrific civil liberties and human rights violations perpetrated against Indigenous peoples in the residential school system. We made a

commitment to confront the injustices Indigenous people continue to experience that are rooted in the legacies of colonialism on these lands:

"We pledge to you our vigilance in using whatever resources we have to oppose violations of the rights and freedoms of Indigenous people now and in the future. And we pledge our fellowship with Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada as we walk along the difficult road of healing and reconciliation together.

Fulfilling these commitments requires deep changes to the legal, social and economic structures that continue to deprive Indigenous peoples of autonomy and authority over their lives and their lands. Thanks to your support, we have the resources to confront these systemic injustices in meaningful ways. Given our areas of expertise, we are focusing our action on criminal justice and policing, driven by the gross over representation of Indigenous people as the targets of police street harassment, incarceration statistics, and state violence. In recent years, this work has manifested in our ongoing litigation to end indefinite solitary confinement, our work with the Union of BC Indian Chiefs to combat discriminatory street checks by the Vancouver Police Department, and considerable investments in our community law "Policing Indigenous Communities Initiative."

In 2018, our community law work produced some very exciting results. We expanded our delivery of "Know your rights" workshops across the province,

strengthening relationships with Indigenous communities and providing direct assistance to hundreds of people who have experienced negative interactions with police. This program has led to a strategic partnership between the BCCLA and the Office of the Wet'suwet'en to develop an alternative police complaints process grounded in Indigenous justice practices. Our hope is to develop a model that will allow for a more productive and restorative process with opportunities for improving relationships between Indigenous peoples and the police.

"

We pledge our fellowship with Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada as we walk along the difficult road of healing and reconciliation together.

Today, I thank you for your ongoing support and solidarity that makes this vital work possible. Our achievements are indeed yours, and your generosity is contributing to a virtuous cycle. Due to our success in 2018, we were able to attract significant grant funding to expand this vital work into a focus on the punitive conditions placed on marginalized peoples that result in their over incarceration. Stay tuned in 2019 for a brief on these exciting campaigns as they move forward.

Thank you for being part of the movement that supports our work. The more we grow the more we are able to make good on our ongoing commitment to reconciliation and overcoming the systemic injustices experienced by Indigenous people in Canada.

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Lindsay M. Lyster

## **2018 Milestones**

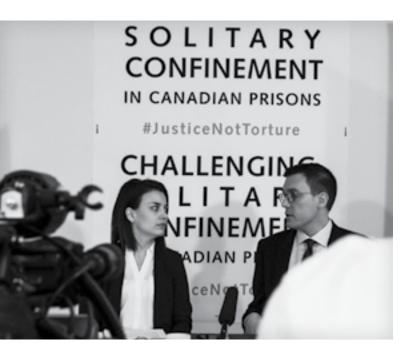
#### Catherine Hart, Supporter Relations Manager

2018 saw major developments in some of the issues we've been working on for years, including policing, solitary confinement, and our rights at the border.

Here's a quick snapshot of our big milestones.

#### Solitary confinement

The year began with a landmark decision when the BC Supreme Court ended indefinite solitary confinement in federal prisons across Canada. The judge in our case



Jay Aubrey, Staff Lawyer and Josh Paterson, Executive Director, at solitary confinement press conference.

affirmed that for decades, prisoners have suffered terribly in solitary confinement cells. Isolated for up to 23 hours a day—sometimes months and years at a time—they have been harmed physically, mentally, and spiritually. This was a huge step forward in the fight for prison justice, and a victory for the currently and previously incarcerated witnesses in our case who bravely shared their testimony.

But a month later, the government appealed our decision, dragging us back to court in an attempt to overturn our ruling. We fought their appeal, and are now waiting for a judgement from the BC Court of Appeal.

At the same time, the government has introduced Bill C-83 that they say will "end solitary." We are concerned that it is simply a rebranding of existing practices, and will continue much of the same practice by another name. Amongst other issues, the bill does not establish a time limit spent in the new form of isolation, called "Structured Intervention Units." We will continue fighting to end the abuse of solitary confinement in the coming year, both in Parliament and all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada if necessary.

#### Fighting discrimination in police street checks

This year we embarked on a renewed campaign focusing on racial bias in policing. For many years we have heard from racialized communities in BC that they are overpoliced and under-protected. These experiences have now been echoed with the release of decade-long data from the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) that starkly show the significant over-representation of Indigenous and Black people in the rates of street checks.

After several years of raising the issue of street checks with the VPD, the BCCLA and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs filed a complaint in mid-June against the VPD calling for an



Chief Bob Chamberlin, Vice President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, Dylan Mazur, Community Lawyer, and Josh Paterson, Executive Directorvat a press conference after Police Board meeting regarding street checks.

reported a history of negative police interactions, including RCMP disproportionately stopping and surveilling Indigenous people. Currently, there is no provincial regulation specifically dealing with street checks and police stops in BC, but concrete change is possible.

Over 1,400 of our supporters joined us to call on the BC government to develop policies to end the over-

immediate investigation into the racial disparity in "street check" practices. The Police Board agreed that there needs to be community-based research on these harms.

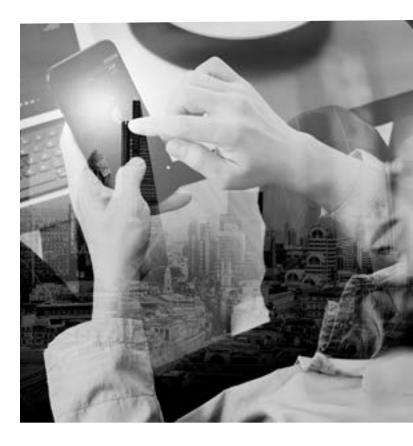
We know that this isn't simply a Vancouver problem. Communities in Rural and Northern BC especially have representation of racialized and Indigenous communities in the rates of street checks by police. In the coming year we'll work to ensure they develop a policy that will end the over-policing and under-protection of racialized and Indigenous communities.

#### Privacy and electronic devices at the border

This year we also released our new Electronic Devices Privacy Handbook—a resource to let you know your rights at the border. When you slip your smart phone into your pocket or laptop into your bag, it is easy to forget the volume of information you're carrying with you.

For many, it is an entire library—years of correspondence, business records, personal conversations, photos, web surfing history, and reading habits—all stored on one device. The idea of someone digging through all that information and deciding if you should be allowed to come into Canada or not seems implausible, but that is exactly what happens when the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) searches electronic devices at the border.

We translated this helpful guide into French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Tagalog and Punjabi, and it's been downloaded over 3,400 times already. We hope this will help you make sense of the current state of play with respect to electronic searches at the Canadian border and at US preclearance zones in Canada, so you can be to be as prepared as possible for your next border crossing. Check it out at **www.bccla.org/edevices.** 



# **BCCLA by the Numbers**

# 2018

2018 was a remarkable year for the BCCLA. In our long history, we have won many important victories for human rights and civil liberties, but in 2018 our impact was greater than ever. Here's a brief look at what we accomplished.



ăă 1,100

hours of probono legal work

**35 E** policy submissions



interviews in print, radio, and TV media





# **Identification Policy and Civil Liberties**

#### By Meghan McDermott, Counsel (Policy)

Do you remember what information you provided when you last accessed a government service? Did you have to present photo identification (ID), or scan your fingerprint? These questions relate to ID policy, an issue that we monitor closely due to the core tension between identifying people and protecting privacy.

ID policy boils down to the methods that public bodies use to identify people in various contexts. The features that interest us about ID policy include the loss of anonymity, the justification provided by government for the intrusion on privacy, and the capacity for data matching (i.e. whether the state can build big files about all aspects of our relationships with different entities).

In 2018 we noticed a number of changes in ID policy that warrant attention.

#### **Increased Collection of Fingerprints**

There are two contexts in which the collection of fingerprints has expanded. Raising significant concerns, there are reports that people seeking criminal record checks for work or volunteering purposes are increasingly being required to provide fingerprints. Also, the scope of individuals required to submit fingerprints for immigration purposes has widened. Such biometrics are now being collected from all applicants for a visitor visa, a study or work permit, refugee or asylum status, or permanent residence.

#### **BC Ignores Needs of Homeless People**

Until recently, people in BC could access health care services without a photo ID. Also, if a person lost their ID, they could apply for a replacement card without having a permanent address. As these options no longer exist, some people, and particularly homeless people, are now facing huge bills because they cannot prove that they are eligible for health care services. Changes which were supposed to "modernize" the system have instead been inefficient, and caused stress and uncertainty for marginalized people.

#### Pan-Canadian Digital ID

Calls for a national ID systems have arisen periodically in recent years. The latest proposal comes from the Digital ID & Authentication Council of Canada, a group made up of representatives from the public and private sector to develop a framework to establish a "Canadian digital identity ecosystem." One of our overarching concerns with a digital ID is that many private and public actors will demand access to the database for ever-expanding purposes. The creation of a central database would be, as we have said before, a "goldmine for many prospectors."



## Know Your Rights: A Review of Community Law in 2018

#### By Dylan Mazur, Community Lawyer

In 2018, we collaborated with Indigenous communities, Indigenous friendship centers, and grassroots organizations to provide public legal education on people's rights in relation to police. Our Community Lawyer, Dylan Mazur, and our Consulting Lawyer, Sonya Pighin, collaborated with local organizers to conduct 15 *Know Your Rights* workshops in 10 communities across British Columbia. Here were some of our highlights:

#### Fire Pit Cultural Drop-In Centre, Prince George

In our workshop with the Fire Pit Cultural Drop-in Centre in Prince George, we provided *Know Your Rights* information to over 60 primarily Indigenous participants. Participants shared their first-hand knowledge of policing in Prince George, including their experiences of racial profiling. We were on our feet, moving from table to table, while people asked us questions about police stops, searches, and detentions. Representatives of the Independent Investigations Office and the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP were with us to answer questions about police accountability in British Columbia.

#### West Kootenay EcoSociety, Nelson

In our workshop with the West Kootenay EcoSociety in Nelson, we provided *Know Your Rights* information for over 20 participants in the basement of St. Saviour Anglican Church. Participants shared their first-hand knowledge of policing in the context of environmental protests in the Kootenays, including land and watershed protection. We sat in a circle of folding chairs, and answered questions about rights on police stops and searches, as well as the laws around injunctions and contempt of court. In 2019, we look forward to collaborating with other communities to bring *Know Your Rights* workshops to other parts of the province as we launch another part of our Policing Indigenous Communities Initiative. This initiative aims to address the overrepresentation and disproportionate impact of policing on Indigenous communities in BC. In particular, we're expanding our efforts to address issues of police accountability and conditions of release for Indigenous communities in Northern BC. Stay tuned in the next year for updates on project developments and highlights!

#### MAY Haisla (*Kitimat*) In partnership with

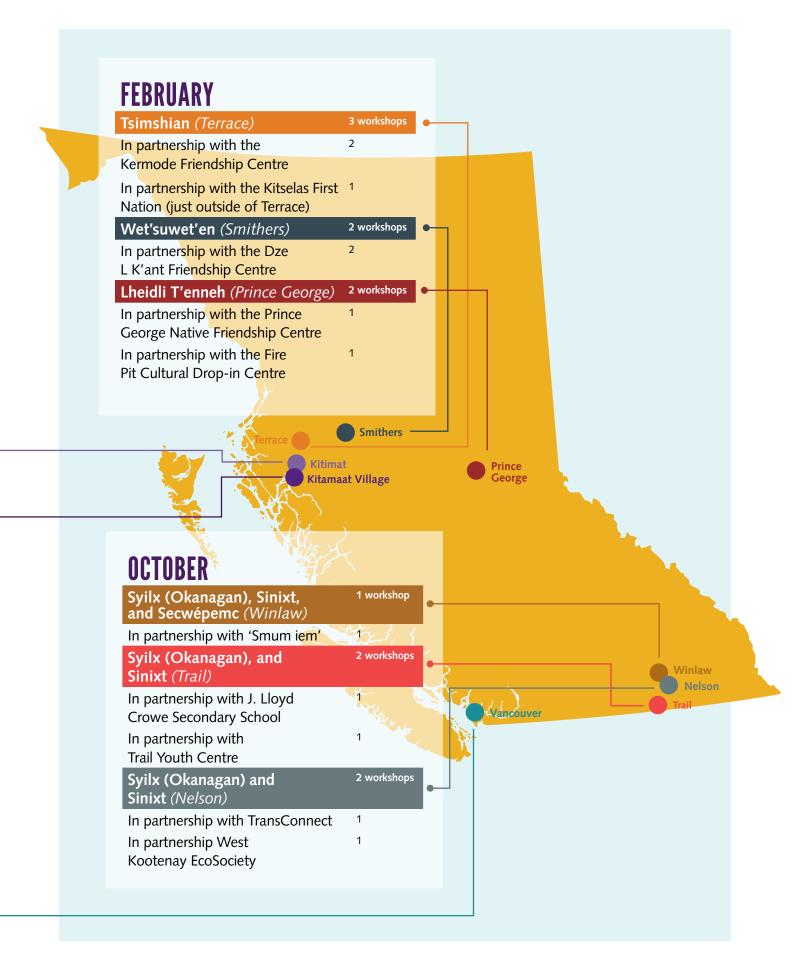
In partnership with the Kitimat Valley Institute	1	
Kitamaat Village, Haisla		•
In partnership with the	1	
Haisla Nation		

2 workshops

### MARCH

xwməθkwəỷəm (Musqueam), <sup>1 workshop</sup> Skxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwəta?ł (Tsleil-waututh) (Vancouver) In partnership with the Vancouver 1

In partnership with the Vancouver Aboriginal Transformative Justice Services Society



## Access to Justice for Immigration Detainees: *Chhina v. Canada*

#### By Kate Oja, Counsel (Litigation)

Thousands of people are held in immigration detention in Canada each year. Of them, hundreds are held for longer than 90 days;<sup>1</sup> some, for years.<sup>2</sup> Detainees are held in either immigration holding centres, or maximum security jails, often without any release date. Avenues available to challenge their detention through the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA)* are narrow: detainees are disadvantaged by judicial review's restricted access, limited scope, and burden of proof.

In the case of *Chhina v. Canada*, the Supreme Court has been asked to determine whether immigration detainees have access to another, more powerful tool to challenge the legality of their detention: *habeas corpus*.

Tusif Ur Rehman Chhina arrived in Canada in 2006 from Pakistan, and was granted refugee status. His status was revoked and he was found to be inadmissible to Canada due to serious criminality. After serving a jail sentence for his convictions, he was placed in immigration detention, awaiting deportation. In 2016, after a cumulative total of 13 months in immigration detention, Chhina brought an application for *habeas corpus*, arguing that his detention was illegal because it was lengthy and indeterminate. Chhina lost in superior court but was successful on appeal. In 2017, after 26 months in immigration detention, the Alberta Court of Appeal ruled that Chhina should have the right to argue *habeas corpus*, finding that *IRPA*'s detention review process was inadequate. Canada appealed, and the case was argued at the Supreme Court in November, 2018.

As an intervener in the case, the BCCLA focused on the importance of *habeas corpus* to the rule of law, which is enshrined in the *Charter*. It gives detainees a simple and effective mechanism for challenging the lawfulness of their detention: a means of holding the state to account. The BCCLA argued for an expansive approach to the availability of *habeas corpus* for immigration detainees. After all, what is the right to liberty without a tool for challenging the state's power to take it away?

The Court's decision is still on reserve. The BCCLA is represented by counsel Frances Mahon, in Vancouver.

What is the right to liberty without a tool for challenging the state's power to take it away?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For the fiscal years 2012-2017, an average of 7,215 people were held in immigration detention each year, for an average of 19.5 days each. For the 2016-2017 fiscal year, 439 people were held for over 90 days. See https://www.cbc.ca/news/opinion/immigration-detention-1.4733897.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See the case of *Chaudhary v. Canada*, [2015] O.J. No. 5438, in which four individuals had been held in immigration detention for periods ranging from 1 year 8 months, to over 8 years.

## Why the BCCLA's Struggle for Death with Dignity Matters

By Denise Keep, BCCLA supporter



Rick Keep and his wife Denise. Image courtesy of Denise Keep.

I am the widow of Frederick James (Rick) Keep. Rick suffered from Primary Progressive Multiple Sclerosis (PPMS) and begged his doctors for help to die for over a year. His requests were denied because his death was not deemed "reasonably foreseeable." Rick's agonizing last year of life was dominated by fear and uncertainty because he did not know if a peaceful death would be available to him.

Rick was finally approved for medical assistance in dying (MAID) in October 2018. In accordance with his wishes, he passed away with the assistance of a supportive doctor at our home on November 13, 2018. After many months of suffering, Rick was finally able to die on his own terms.

Rick and I started dating in 1977 and were together ever since. We were not just husband and wife, we were two peas in a pod. After he was diagnosed with PPMS, Rick showed his characteristic "can do" attitude. For over a decade, he suffered setbacks, but we worked hard to make the most of life.

Rick's PPMS took a significant turn for the worse in the last two years. He required assistance with all his activities of daily living. His pain was excruciating. He developed open sores over his body. He had recurrent skin infections, including in his eyes, and staph infections. His right foot and lower right leg retained so much water that he had to wear a pressure sock because his doctor was concerned the level of swelling would cause his foot to crack open.

Rick felt trapped in endless, unwanted suffering, but physicians told Rick he was not eligible for MAID because he could live for another 15 years or more in his state. The law that the government enacted in 2016 required that Rick's "natural death" become "reasonably foreseeable." A team of physicians observed Rick's incurable illness for over a year, methodically documenting his decline. Finally, they accepted him for MAID. Rick immediately scheduled his death for one month later, the earliest date that gave his family time to fly in and say goodbye.

I am grateful that Rick died gently, but I cannot stop thinking about his last year of life. I feel fear, helplessness, and horror as I remember his suffering.

Rick and I have both shared our stories with the BCCLA to help their case, which will go to trial later this year. Rick believed no human being should have to face what he had to face. Rick was always standing up for the little guy. He was a lifelong union activist in blue jeans. After his death, over two hundred people filled the funeral home to celebrate his life. I am not surprised that even after his death, Rick is still working to make a difference by challenging this unjust law.



Rick Keep. Image courtesy of Denise Keep.

## **Our New Home at BC Artscape Sun Wah**

#### By Maggie Knight, Operations Director

In September, we were joined by friends and supporters for a housewarming celebrating the BCCLA's new longterm home in Vancouver's Chinatown. In March 2018, the BCCLA ended a search of several years and moved to BC Artscape Sun Wah, a new community cultural hub which spans three floors of the Sun Wah Centre (originally built as a Hong Kong-style mall in the mid-1980s). By providing affordable and secure rental space to artists and to cultural and community organizations, BC Artscape Sun Wah aims to support their tenants' work while serving the neighbourhood.

We are committed to being good neighbours and to continuing and deepening our work with local communities – including people in Chinatown, the Downtown Eastside, and Strathcona – as we fight for equality, liberty, freedom, and justice. As we know, Chinatown residents have experienced many infringements of their rights and many external forces





changing the neighbourhood, from historic racially discriminatory housing policy to current development and gentrification pressures.

Now, the construction dust is gone and the bare hallways are increasingly adorned with art from our fellow tenants. BCCLA staff join in monthly tenant potlucks and recently attended a dumpling lunch fundraiser for our fellow tenant Yarrow Society for Intergenerational Justice. We collaborated with another fellow tenant, Pathways to Education, to engage low income youth in their mentorship program in our annual Rights Talk youth conference, and have been working to use our purchasing power to benefit long-standing local shops where possible. We have been happy to host legal information sessions, press conferences, and partner discussions in the building's new event spaces.

As one of the first and largest tenants, we look forward to helping the community cultural hub flourish, and to inviting supporters and community members to visit us here for many years to come.

Amy Gill (left) and Maggie Knight (above) at a dumpling lunch fundraiser for the Yarrow Society for Intergenerational Justice.

## 2018 Board and Staff

#### **Board of Directors**

Hasan Alam (from May 2018) Lindsey Bertrand V. Warren Bourgeois (to May 2018) **Derek Brackley** Allister Browne (to May 2018) Ian Bushfield Paul Champ David Fai Michael Friedlaender Rishi Gill (to April 2018) Sarah Hamilton (from May 2018) Lisa Kerr Jonathan Levitt Edwin Levy (to May 2018) Lindsay Lyster, Q.C. **Richard Marcuse** Melody Mason Kevin Millsip Karen Mirsky Ayendri Riddell (from May 2018) Alan Rowan John Russell (to May 2018) Tom Sandborn Steven Savitt Paul Schachter Paul Tétrault Maureen Webb (from May 2018) Vanessa Wolff

#### **Honorary Directors**

Thomas Berger, O.C., O.B.C. Q.C. Neil Boyd The Right Honourable Kim Campbell, P.C., C.C., O.B.C., Q.C. Andrew Coyne Bill Deverell David H. Flaherty, O.C., O.B.C. John Fraser, P.C., O.B.C., Q.C. Gordon Gibson, O.B.C. Mike Harcourt, O.C. Art Lee Stephen Owen, P.C., Q.C. Svend Robinson David Suzuki, C.C., O.B.C.

#### Staff

Jay Aubrey, Staff Counsel (Litigation) Iman Baobeid, Communications and Outreach Manager Latoya Farrell, Articling Student Amy Gill, Executive Coordinator Jessi Halliday, Litigation and Operations Coordinator Catherine Hart, Supporter Relations Manager Mark Hosak, Director of Community Engagement Maggie Knight, Operations Director Emily Lapper, Senior Staff Counsel (Litigation) (On leave) Dylan Mazur, Community Lawyer Meghan McDermott, Staff Counsel (Policy) Kate Oja, Staff Counsel (Litigation) Grace Pastine, Litigation Director Josh Paterson, Executive Director Micheal Vonn, Policy Director

## Thank You

The BCCLA is a small organization with just 15 staff, but through the incredible support of pro bono counsel and volunteers across the country, we are changing the landscape of civil liberties in Canada. We'd like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who donated their time and talent to us in 2018.

#### Volunteers

Anabela Anwaar Baobeid Andrew Kong **Bill Hosak** Deborah Hosak Ramya Hosak Vincent Li Emma Lodge Sancho McCann Fiona Shi Sydney Soldan Zach Paradis Jordan Pau Zoe Peterson Kayla Phillips Amber Preet

#### **Summer Students**

Melody Cheung Hilary Chu Graeme Cook

#### Pro bono counsel

Greg Allen Stephen Aylward Colleen Bauman Jeff Beddell Caroline Bérubé Tyler Botten **Craig Bottomley** Simon Carter David Carter Shannon Carter Paul Champ Geoffrey Dashwood Caily DiPuma John Erickson Matthew Estabrooks Caroline Etter **Greg Fingas** Joseph J Arvay, O.C., Q.C **Christine Johnson** Abbas Kassam Diana King Darryl Korell

Alison Latimer Andrew MacDonald **Emily MacKinnon** Frances Mahon David Martin Tae Mee Park Roy Millen John Myers Jessica Orkin Michael Rosenberg **Bijon Roy** Dan Sheppard Michael Sobkin Ariel Solose Christopher Terepocki Sheila Tucker, Q.C. Brendan Van Niejenhuis Maxine Vincelette Christine Wadsworth Adriel Weaver Maggie Wente Nathan Whitling

# **Financial Statement**

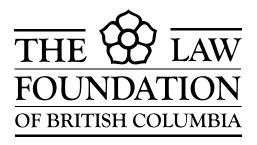
Statement of operations and	2018			2017	
changes in fund balances	General Fund	Stabilization Fund	Trust Fund	Total	Total
Year ended December 31	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
REVENUE					
Membership and donations	663,987			663,987	509,086
Distributions from BCCLA Legacy Trust Fund	310,000			310,000	455,000
Law Foundation of BC - operating grant	190,000			190,000	175,000
Miscellaneous and special events	108,232			108,232	4,482
Grants earned	106,135			106,135	82,457
Amortization of deferred contributions	6,836			6,836	
Endowment distributions	5,817			5,817	5,530
Litigation recovery					31,931
Net investment income (loss)	114	(22,199)	(67,479)	(89,564)	103,513
	1,391,121	(22,199)	(67,479)	1,301,443	1,366,999
EXPENSES					
Salaries and benefits	913,150			913,150	844,308
Office operating	98,335			98,335	97,104
Fundraising	89,370			89,370	41,517
Contract fees	82,561			82,561	92,506
Rent and utilities	71,306			71,306	59,567
Litigation costs	49,737			49,737	118,444
Travel and accommodation	42,935			42,935	36,848
Amortization	32,488			32,488	5,609
Bank and donation processing charges	17,065			17,065	14,320
Newsletter	9,892			9,892	15,736
Meetings, publications, events	4,834			4,834	5,888
Conference	3,028			3,028	5,466
Insurance	2,816			2,816	2,607
	1,417,517			1,417,517	1,339,920
Excess of revenue (expenses) for the year	(26,396)	(22,199)	(67,479)	(116,074)	27,079
Interfund transfers	209,880	(30,816)	(179,064)		
	183,484	(53,015)	(246,543)	(116,074)	27,079
Fund balances, beginning of year	340,886	107,795	917,154	1,365,835	1,338,756
Fund balances, end of year	524,370	54,780	670,611	1,249,761	1,365,835

*Treasurer's note:* Before interfund transfers, this statement shows a moderate General Fund deficit due to the significant increase in amortization costs which resulted from the capital project upgrades required by our office relocation (without the increase to amortization costs, we would have had a small operating surplus without the interfund transfers). The overall deficit is the result of poor market performance in late 2018.

The complete 2018 BCCLA audited financial statements are available at www.bccla.org. The statement is subject to final audit approval by the Board of Directors and will be presented to our members at the 2019 Annual General Meeting on May 8th.

The Democratic Commitment is a publication of the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association. The Association was established in 1962 and is the oldest continuously active civil liberties association in Canada. Its mandate is to preserve, defend, maintain, and extend civil liberties and human rights in British Columbia and across Canada.

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