



News Release

For Immediate Release
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RICHARD CONFIRMED AS REPRESENTATIVE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

VICTORIA – Bernard Richard has been confirmed by the British Columbia Legislature as the province’s second Representative for Children and Youth.

Richard’s appointment was confirmed today in a unanimous vote of MLAs for a five-year term as Representative, pursuant to section 2 of the *Representative for Children and Youth Act*. Prior to confirmation, he served as Acting Representative since Nov. 27, 2016.

“I am appreciative today of receiving unanimous support from the Members of the Legislative Assembly,” Richard said. “While I feel the full weight of the responsibilities that come with the job, I look forward to our Office helping to bring about positive change for B.C.’s children, youth and their families during the next five years.”

Richard is a bilingual lawyer whose early career was in social work and as Secretary General of the Société Nationale de l’Acadie. In 1991, he was elected to the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick, where he served until 2003. He held several New Brunswick cabinet positions and was also leader of the Official Opposition, Opposition House Leader and chair of the Official Opposition caucus. In January 2004, Richard became New Brunswick’s sixth Ombudsman. In November 2006, he was named New Brunswick’s first Child and Youth Advocate.

Richard is B.C.’s second Representative for Children and Youth. His priorities include reducing the number of Indigenous children and youth in care in B.C., improving services to youth aging out of care and helping to strengthen mental health services and supports for children and youth.

While the RCY will continue to produce reports on the child welfare system, Richard said the Office will also focus on youth outreach and on working co-operatively with government ministries to create positive results, including taking an active role in monitoring Care Plans.

“We will continue to provide crucial independent oversight of the child welfare system,” Richard said. “And my hope is that my term as Representative will ultimately be measured in concrete improvements for the most vulnerable children and youth in B.C.”

Media Contact:

Jeff Rud

Executive Director, Strategy and Communications. 250-216-4725. Email: Jeff.Rud@rcybc.ca