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## **B.C. Celebrates Historic Moment for Canadians with Disabilities**

***Government of Canada tables the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities***

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**December 8, 2009, New Westminster, B.C.** – The BC Association for Community Living is happy to celebrate the tabling of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in the House of Commons. Minister Peter McKay tabled the CRPD on December 3, 2009, indicating his government’s intention to move toward formal ratification of the CRPD. Canada was one of the first countries to sign the convention two years ago and advocates across the country have been eagerly anticipating its ratification. BCACL commends the Government of Canada for confirming their commitment to the rights of persons with disabilities in this country.

“This is truly a historic moment for Canada and for Canadian citizens with disabilities in that the ratification of the CRPD is one more mechanism to entrench and actualize the rights of persons with disabilities”, said Bendina Miller, President of the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL). “We applaud the leadership demonstrated by the Government of Canada in the development and signing of this convention, and now today in taking this final step toward its ratification.”

Once the convention is ratified, all provinces will be asked to endorse it. When that time comes, BCACL hopes that Premier Gordon Campbell will show leadership by endorsing the convention without reservation.

“This Convention will make a meaningful difference in the lives of persons with disabilities in this province,” says BCACL President Rory Summers. “While it does not introduce any new rights, it is an important tool and framework in helping communities and governments understand how and why a person’s rights aren’t being realized.”