



# CANADA'S NEW GOVERNMENT

## FEDERAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT AND ACTION PLAN

### TURNING A NEW LEAF

April 11, 2006



*“With the Federal Accountability Act and Action Plan, we are creating a new culture of accountability that will change the way business is done in Ottawa forever.”*

—Prime Minister Stephen Harper,  
April 11, 2006

#### STANDING UP FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Canadians expect elected officials and the public service to manage their tax dollars wisely and to uphold the highest standards of conduct.

The Government of Canada is committed to rebuilding the confidence and trust of Canadians. That is why, on April 11, 2006, the Government introduced the *Federal Accountability Act* and Action Plan.

The Action Plan is about making government more effective and accountable. It is about clarifying roles and responsibilities and having the right controls in place.

With these proposed measures, the Government is delivering on its commitment to stand up for accountability.

#### NEW LIMITS ON DONATIONS TO POLITICAL PARTIES

The Government will toughen laws governing financing of political parties and candidates. It will reduce individual donations from \$5,000 to \$1,000 a year, ban contributions by corporations, unions, and associations, and ban secret donations and gifts to political candidates.

Together these changes will help give government back to ordinary Canadians so they can feel more confident about the integrity of the democratic process.

#### STRICTER RULES FOR LOBBYING

The Government will introduce stricter rules for lobbying. It will ban contingency fees and prohibit former ministers, ministerial aides, and senior public servants from lobbying for five years after they leave office. In addition, a new Commissioner of Lobbying will have the power to investigate violations and enforce the rules.

These changes will help ensure that lobbying is done in an ethical way.

#### REAL PROTECTION FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS

The Government will give real protection for whistleblowers by establishing a Public Sector Integrity Commissioner with the power to enforce the *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act*. The law will extend to all federal bodies and will protect all Canadians who report government wrongdoing—not just public servants.

These changes will help create an environment in which Canadians can honestly and openly report government wrongdoing without fear.

#### POWER FOR THE AUDITOR GENERAL TO “FOLLOW THE MONEY”

The Government will give new powers to the Auditor General so that Parliament and Canadians can more effectively hold the government to account. The Auditor General will have the power to audit individuals and organizations that receive government funding under a funding agreement.

These changes will strengthen the role of the Office of the Auditor General as an independent and reliable source of information about government spending.

#### MORE OPEN GOVERNMENT

The Government will change access to information legislation to promote a culture of openness and accessibility. It will extend this law to include Crown corporations, Agents of Parliament, and foundations created under federal statute.

The Government will also undertake additional steps to reform the *Access to Information Act*, in collaboration with parliamentarians and Canadians. The goal is to make government more open while balancing legitimate requirements for personal privacy, commercial confidentiality, and national security.

#### STREAMLINING RULES TO IMPROVE HOW GOVERNMENT WORKS

The Government will strengthen and streamline its management policies. It will simplify rules and reduce red tape. It will review its procurement and financial management policies, as well as the rules that govern grants and contributions programs.

#### MOVING AHEAD

The Government will work with parliamentarians to pass the proposed *Federal Accountability Act*. Implementation of the Action Plan will begin immediately.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on these and other measures in the proposed *Federal Accountability Act* and Action Plan, visit [www.accountability.gc.ca](http://www.accountability.gc.ca) or call 1-877-636-0656.