



For immediate release:

### **Housing Strategy Provides New Opportunities for People in Need**

**Vancouver, BC – October 4, 2006.** Innovation is evident in the provincial government’s new housing strategy, announced yesterday by the Honourable Rich Coleman, Minister Responsible for Housing. With a mix of new spending, proven programs and some unique approaches, the strategy could assist as many as 15,000 low-income families and individuals.

“This is a good start,” says BCREA President Kelly Lerigny. “The strategy suggests that the government considered people’s diverse housing needs and the unique mix of options available to address them. The result is an approach that assists people in need and considers the impact on the overall housing sector.”

In 2004, BCREA recommended that the government develop a housing strategy that addressed the needs of people across BC. A strategy that invests in social housing, reinforces consumer confidence, improves the affordability of housing and demonstrates leadership on housing issues is critical.

Investing in more social housing units and increasing the program budget is very important. The portable housing allowance is a unique approach that offers something new. It enables people to choose where they want to live and the housing type that best suits their needs.

The Minister’s commitment to work with other levels of government to promote the development of more market rental housing will be significant, if it enables more people to participate in the program.

“Access to affordable market housing and rental accommodation helps people to get ahead and communities to grow,” notes Lerigny. “When that happens, people and communities prosper.”

The Modernization Strategy is a critical part of the overall strategy. It deals with regulations that govern the construction of buildings and houses. It also guides the relationship between landlords and their tenants.

“Everyone deserves to live in safe housing, whether they own or rent,” explains Lerigny. “The modernization portion includes five very detail oriented projects with the goal of consistent application across the province. It’s encouraging to see value placed on this degree of detail.”

“We’re pleased with today’s announcement,” says Lerigny. “The government appears to be on the right track and we look forward to further announcements that support the broad range of housing needs in BC.”

**For more information, please contact:**

Steve Olmstead, Manager of Government Relations, 604.742.2793