



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY
BUREAU DE RÉGIE INTERNE

Statement

Addressing Harassment Allegations at the House of Commons

Ottawa – November 18, 2014 – The Honourable Andrew Scheer, Speaker of the House of Commons and Chair of the Board of Internal Economy, confirms that the Board held a meeting today to discuss the matter of harassment complaints involving Members of the House of Commons.

The Board is committed to ensuring that the House of Commons is a safe and harassment-free workplace, and was united in its desire to deal with this serious issue in a timely manner.

Discussions were productive and focused on options for developing an effective and respectful anti-harassment policy. The Board was able to agree on interim measures and will be implementing some immediate changes. These measures will make existing House Administration employee resources available to Members and their staff, and will support prevention initiatives and informal conflict resolution.

The Board has agreement in principle to finalize a formal complaint resolution process as soon as possible, which emphasizes impartiality and confidentiality.

With respect to allegations of personal misconduct between Members, the Board recognizes that ultimately the House itself has responsibility for pronouncing on the conduct of its Members. As such, the Board has asked the Speaker to write to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs requesting that it seek an order of reference to review these matters within the context of parliamentary privilege and the impact on Members' conduct and disciplinary processes.

Members, House Officers, Research Offices and their respective employees will be provided with information on how to access *Finding Solutions Together*, the confidential program for informal conflict management resolution, as well as the *Harassment Prevention Program*. The objective of the *Harassment Prevention Program* is to increase awareness and help proactively and constructively stop potential harassment at its earliest stages.

The Board is committed to supporting Members, House Officers, Research Offices and their respective employees in not only dealing with complaints but also in promoting and maintaining a harassment-free workplace.

Media information:

Heather Bradley

Director of Communications, Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons

Telephone: 613-995-7882 | E-mail: heather.bradley@parl.gc.ca