

For Immediate Release

March 14, 2009

**And then there were four!**

(Rimbey, AB) Bill 19 -- the unnecessary draconian piece of legislation introduced on March 2, 2009 to streamline the expropriation of private property in Alberta is in trouble. On Tuesday night March 10, 2009 three PC MLAs of the Alberta government attended a public forum in Warburg, AB to defend Bill 19 and debate Alberta Green Party Leader Joe Anglin. Unable to convince even one attendee to support the Bill at the Warburg forum, Stelmach's PC government was not deterred. On Saturday March 14, 2007 four PC MLAs attended the public forum in Ponoka, AB with the same purpose in mind. At this rate, in a couple of weeks, Anglin expects the entire PC caucus to attend his public presentations. Anglin says Bill 19 is getting no public support at the public forums, and the MLA's tasked to follow him around the province have the unenviable job of trying to convince the public that what they are reading in the Bill actually means something different than what is printed.

Bill 19, if passed, technically elevates any Minister of Cabinet, to the position of Judge, Jury and Executioner. Bill 19 is not necessary because the Alberta Government already has the power to expropriate land as required. Under the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure the Alberta Government already has a process in place to acquire land for roads, pipelines and utility corridors. Why Bill 19, and Why now?

Literally written into the Bill, the Bill states: if in the Minister's opinion, a person has contravened, or the Minister is of the opinion a person is going to contravene an order made under the act, [see Sec 7] the Minister may serve that person with an enforcement order that carries a penalty of a \$100,000 fine and/or two years in jail.

Bill 19 is fundamentally wrong because it gives unprecedented power to a Minister of the government to circumvent the Expropriations Act in the confiscation of private property. Rural property owners do support the creation of utility corridors and the building of roads and infrastructure, but giving this kind of absolute punitive power to a cabinet Minister is not just undemocratic, it is a violation of a citizen's right to due-process of law.

-30-

Joe Anglin  
Leader of the Alberta Greens  
(403) 843-3279