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CAMPBELL MISREPRESENTS HEALTH CARE REPORT FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES – DIX

VICTORIA – Gordon Campbell and his government have consistently misled British Columbians about the results of a Conference Board of Canada report on provincial health care to score political points and deflect criticism, NDP Health Critic Adrian Dix said today.

“The Premier has repeatedly used the report’s findings as an endorsement of his government record,” said Dix. “However, a detailed analysis of the statistical indicators shows that B.C. only finished first in Canada due to outstanding results from 2002 and earlier. Moreover, the results from 2003 – the only results that might reasonably be attributed to the B.C. Liberals’ record – show B.C.’s performance is declining.

“When the Conference Board says B.C. is number one and the Premier repeats it, they are talking about the NDP record,” said Dix.

The Conference Board of Canada report was released in February 2006. The report uses a total of 117 indicators to assess and rank B.C.’s health care performance. Using many statistics from the early 1990s and from 2001, the report concluded that B.C. was the top province. In addition, the majority of top ratings for individual indicators came from 2001 or earlier. The report’s statistical analysis also shows that B.C.’s rating has been in decline since the B.C. Liberals came to power.

“If the Premier wants to have a real conversation on health care, he should start by putting out the facts,” said Dix. “It’s simply not credible to claim B.C. is the best today when the data is so out of date. British Columbians know that our health care system has deteriorated under Gordon Campbell’s watch.

“Emergency rooms are consistently overcrowded, seniors are still waiting for quality long-term care and wait lists continue to grow,” said Dix. “That’s the real conversation the Premier needs to have with British Columbians, not political denial and deflection.”

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