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Media Release

BCLI Releases Consultation Paper on Assisted Living Reform

For immediate release

Vancouver, 28 November 2012 – The British Columbia Law Institute (BCLI) and the Canadian Centre for Elder Law (CCEL) have jointly issued the *Consultation Paper on Assisted Living in British Columbia*, which contains recommendations on reform of the legal and regulatory framework for assisted living in B.C. BCLI/CCEL is seeking public input on its contents.

Assisted living is a form of rental housing where meals, light housekeeping, and certain personal care services are provided to residents in addition to accommodation. It is intended for seniors and persons with disabilities who cannot live independently in safety and require some services, but not 24-hour care. While the number of assisted living dwelling units has expanded greatly in B.C. in the past decade, much uncertainty surrounds the rights and obligations of residents and operators of assisted living facilities. Unlike most other rented housing, assisted living facilities are not subject to the *Residential Tenancy Act*.

A recent report by the Ombudsperson on seniors' care in B.C. drew attention to many of the same issues that the BCLI / CCEL consultation paper addresses in terms of options and recommendations for legislative reform. The consultation paper discusses and responds to the portions of the Ombudsperson's report concerning assisted living.

"The consultation paper addresses numerous areas of uncertainty and gaps in the legal framework for assisted living in this province. It offers solutions based on the views of a very knowledgeable and experienced committee representing a cross-section of the different interests concerned with assisted living," said Jim Emmerton, Executive Director of BCLI.

The Project Committee for the Assisted Living Reform Project that developed the tentative recommendations includes representatives from residents' and tenants' advocacy organizations, private providers of assisted living, BC Housing, regional health authorities, the Office of the Ombudsperson, as well as distinguished lawyers practising in the elder law field.

BCLI / CCEL is seeking responses to the consultation paper by February 28, 2013.
Following review and consideration of the responses, BCLI / CCEL will issue a final report.

The consultation paper is available on the BCLI / CCEL website at:
<http://www.bcli.org/ccel/projects/assisted-living-reform-project>

- 30 -

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