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Media Release

BCLI welcomes bill to implement its Report on Unnecessary Requirements for Sworn Statements

for immediate release

Vancouver, 11 February 2016—The British Columbia Law Institute is pleased by the introduction of Bill 5, the *Miscellaneous Statutes (Signed Statements) Amendment Act, 2016*, into the legislative assembly. Once enacted, Bill 5 will substantially implement the recommendations of BCLI's *Report on Unnecessary Requirements for Sworn Statements* (2006).

"On behalf of BCLI," noted board of directors chair Prof. Joost Blom, QC, "I am grateful to see the legislature take up the reforms proposed in BCLI's report. Their adoption will enhance access to justice and increase efficiency in transactions, all while protecting important safeguards on accuracy and truthfulness."

BCLI's report builds on work stretching back to the 1970s by the former Law Reform Commission of British Columbia, which had examined over 1000 legislative requirements to give a sworn statement in an out-of-court setting and had classified those requirements into 11 categories. These categories were used to develop two priority lists of requirements to give a sworn statement that could be repealed and replaced with a requirement to give an unsworn signed statement. In place of the formalities of a sworn statement, the report recommends ensuring the accuracy of the statement by a general offence provision.

While many of the requirements covered by the 2006 report are addressed by Bill 5, some will still remain in force. BCLI encourages the provincial government to consider extending the approach taken in Bill 5 to these provisions.

The British Columbia Law Institute strives to be a leader in law reform by carrying out the best in scholarly law-reform research and writing and the best in outreach relating to law reform.

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