



April 7, 2009

## **Chief Electoral Officer to review access to provincial polling stations**

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission announced today a settlement which will help to ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access provincial polling stations.

John Brown alleged in his complaint to the Commission that he had been discriminated against because of disability when he was unable to vote independently during the last provincial election. The polling place he attended was not accessible to persons who use wheelchairs. In settling the complaint, the Province's Chief Electoral Officer has agreed to review all existing facilities for accessibility and to make recommendations for alternative locations for the next general election.

“This settlement addresses the systemic issue of access for persons with disabilities to facilities where the public is customarily admitted,” said Judge David M. Arnot, Chief Commissioner of the SHRC. “In not being able to access the polling location, Mr. Brown was denied the right to freely exercise his franchise, contrary to section 8 of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*. We believe the extra steps the Chief Electoral Officer is taking to train Returning Officers and to develop communications strategies for reaching persons with accessibility concerns will further enhance their ability to vote in the near future.”

- 30 -

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