

## **Speaking Notes for Senator Vivienne Poy**

### **National Association of Asian American Professionals NAAAP 100 Award**

**New York, NY  
August 25, 2012**

**Good evening friends:**

**I would like, first of all, to bring greetings from the Senate of Canada.**

**A few months ago, I received a letter from Emily Seto informing me that I had been chosen as one of the award recipients for NAAAP 100 this year. Then I found out that Ben Hum had nominated me! Thank you Ben. What an introduction to your outstanding organization! Having read the list of your past recipients, it is with the greatest humility that I am standing here to accept this award.**

**We all know that Asians have had a very difficult history in North America, and, needless to say, those of us of Asian heritage understand that the struggle for recognition still exists. I am glad that Canada became part of NAAAP 11 years ago.**

**Even though the Canadian population is less than 1/10<sup>th</sup> of that of the U.S., the percentage of Asian Canadians is far greater than that for Asian Americans - more than 11% in Can. and less than 6% in the U.S. I believe our immigration pattern is also different from yours. Ever since the 1980s, the majority of Canadian immigrants have come from Asia. As of 2010, the top 3 source countries are the Philippines, India, and China. So the total percentage of Asians in the Canadian population is rising very rapidly. Since 2001, Chinese has replaced Italian as the 3<sup>rd</sup> most spoken language in Canada. Despite that, Asian Canadians face similar obstacles to our compatriots in the US. And, we need to help each other.**

**As the first Canadian of Asian heritage appointed to the Senate of Canada, over the past 14 years, I have strived to highlight the fact that Asians helped to build Canada as a nation, and that we should be recognized for our continuous important contributions to all aspects of Canadian life.**

**I am invited frequently to speak to different groups across Canada, by the mainstream as well as new Canadian communities, from school children to seniors' clubs. I would like to believe that I have had a positive influence in Canadian society. And, I have noticed, over the years, that there is a much wider acceptance and greater recognition of Asians across Canada. To me, the most important thing I notice is the growing pride in our Asian heritage.**

**I realize that next year's conference will be held in Toronto, my hometown. I wish to extend a warm welcome to all of you to come to Toronto.**

**In closing, I wish to congratulate Doris Ching, Hines Ward, Ike Song and Richard Lui, my co-honorees this evening, for their outstanding achievements. At this 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NAAAP, I wish you continuous success as your organization grows bigger and stronger as you pursue your goal of helping develop Asian leaders for North America.**

**Thank you, again, for this great honour you have bestowed upon me. Have a wonderful evening!**