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THE HONOURABLE VIVIENNE POY

Retirement Announcement

Statement by:

The Honourable Vivienne Poy

Wednesday, June 27, 2012

THE SENATE

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RETIREMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

Hon. Vivienne Poy: Honourable senators, on September 17, I will have been in this chamber for 14 years. It has been an enriching experience, but I believe it is time for me to take on new challenges as a full-time writer and globetrotter. Neville and I have just celebrated our fiftieth anniversary, and from now on we would like to spend more time with our family.

Before I leave, I would like to thank former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien for giving me the opportunity to serve Canadians across the country. It has been a great privilege to get to know so many extraordinary Canadians over the years.

When I first arrived here in 1998, I did not know anyone on the Hill. Coming from a community background, I had difficulty adjusting initially to the political environment. Many senators were very kind to me when I first arrived. Over the years most of them have retired, but not all.

One very notable senator is Marie Charette-Poulin, who probably is not even aware of how much she helped me adjust to life in Ottawa. She kindly spoke at the luncheon when I was installed as Chancellor of the University of Toronto. She even introduced us to a contractor who renovated our condo here with efficiency and good workmanship. Thank you very much, Marie.

Another notable senator I would like to thank is our Speaker, Senator Noël Kinsella, for his encouragement and support in 2001 in getting the motion to recognize May as Asian Heritage Month adopted. I remember him telling me I should try to get it through before Christmas, which was excellent advice. This has turned out to be the single greatest motivator for all Asian Canadians to be proud of our heritage.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank my staff. The moment my appointment was announced in September 1998, letters and phone calls appealing for help started to arrive. I asked Senate Human Resources to send me someone on a temporary basis, and that was Bev Muma, who has been with me ever since. My Policy Adviser, Carol Reichert, came to work for me from the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University 12 years ago. They are both in the gallery. I want to thank them for keeping my office running smoothly and efficiently and for keeping me out of trouble because, after 14 years, I am still politically naive.

• (1340)

Finally, I would like to wish all honourable senators continuous success and good health in your pursuit of the common good for all Canadians. Thank you.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!
