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NEWS RELEASE

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LEGISLATION PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM ON-LINE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION COMES INTO FORCE

OTTAWA, December 9, 2011 – The Honourable Rob Nicholson, P.C., Q.C., M.P. for Niagara Falls, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, announced yesterday that Bill C-22, *An Act respecting the mandatory reporting of Internet child pornography by persons who provide an Internet service*, came into force. The legislation helps protect children from on-line sexual exploitation.

"Canadians are rightfully concerned that in 2010, child pornography offences were up by more than 30 percent," said Minister Nicholson. "The sexual exploitation of children by Internet sexual predators is a very serious crime and our Government is committed to taking tough action against it."

In September 2008, the Federal/Provincial/Territorial ministers responsible for Justice agreed that Canada's response to child pornography could be enhanced by federal legislation establishing mandatory reporting of on-line child pornography by providers of Internet services.

Bill C-22 applies to suppliers of Internet services to the public, including those who provide electronic mail services, Internet content hosting services, and social networking sites. It requires them to:

- report tips they receive regarding Web sites where child pornography may be publicly available to the Canadian Centre for Child Protection; and
- notify police and safeguard evidence if they believe that a child pornography offence has been committed using an Internet service that they provide.

The Canadian Centre for Child Protection is a charitable organization which operates Cybertip.ca, Canada's national tip line to report on-line sexual abuse of children.

"The goal of mandatory reporting is to facilitate the reporting of child pornography on the Internet," said Lianna McDonald, Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Child

Protection. “We are confident that this legislation will reduce the circulation of these harmful images, rescue victims and identify those committing crimes against children.”

“Police forces across Canada make every effort to combat the creation and distribution of child pornography, but cannot eliminate on-line sexual exploitation by working alone,” said Kerry-Lynne Findlay, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Member of Parliament for Delta-Richmond East. “Our Government is providing police in B.C. and across the country with the tools they need, and making it clear that we all have a role to play in protecting our children.”

The Government also recently introduced the *Safe Streets and Communities Act*, which aims to better protect children and youth from sexual predators. It proposes increased penalties for sexual offences against children and would create two new offences aimed at conduct that could enable the commission of a sexual offence against a child.

An on-line version of the legislation is available at www.parl.gc.ca.

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