



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**

**ETHICS COMMISSIONER CLEARS MP'S TO VOTE**

**October 27, 2011**

OTTAWA — The Honourable Lynne Yelich, Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification and Member of Parliament for Blackstrap, was pleased to learn that Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner Mary Dawson has ruled that Members of Parliament who are farmers will not be required to withdraw from debates or votes related to Bill C-18, *The Marketing Freedom for Grain Farmers Act*.

“Once again, the NDP show how disconnected they are from Western Canadian farmers and how they will do anything to prevent Western farmers from having marketing freedom”, said Minister Yelich.

Earlier this week NDP MP Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre) repeatedly called on farmers in the Conservative Caucus to recuse themselves from debates and votes on C-18, citing conflict of interest.

In the opinion of Ethics Commissioner Dawson, with some 70,000 grain farmers in Western Canada who will have an interest in C-18, an interest shared with a broad segment of the public, this matter therefore falls within the exclusions set out in the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons.

“In line with the decision by the Ethics Commissioner, our Party will be the only party voting to give farmers the marketing freedom that they want and deserve – the same marketing freedom that farmers enjoy in Ontario”, Yelich concluded.

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