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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH COREY O-SOUP SUSPENDED

Provincial ombudsman Mary McFadyen appointed Interim Advocate for Children and Youth

REGINA, SK - Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Mark Docherty today announced that the Board of Internal Economy has suspended Corey O'Soup from his duties as Advocate for Children and Youth, effective immediately and has appointed Provincial Ombudsman Mary McFadyen to serve as Interim Advocate for Children and Youth.

O'Soup's suspension is the result of an investigation into multiple complaints of harassment. The investigation was conducted by an independent investigator with extensive experience investigating harassment complaints.

Under *The Legislative Assembly Act, 2007*, the employment of individuals appointed as Independent Officers of the Legislative Assembly can only be removed by a vote of the Members of the Legislative Assembly. Legislation does provide the Board of Internal Economy the authority to suspend Statutory Officers if the need arises when the Assembly is not in session.

"Harassment cannot be tolerated in any workplace, and certainly not in the office of a Statutory Officer of the Assembly," said Docherty. "I want to assure the staff members of the Advocate's Office, and of all Statutory Offices, that we support their right to work in a safe and respectful environment. I fully intend to bring this matter before the Assembly at the earliest opportunity in its next sitting."

The Board appointed an Interim Advocate for Children and Youth to ensure the important operations of the office are able to continue uninterrupted. Prior to the creation of a separate Advocate for Children and Youth, the Provincial Ombudsman performed that role.

"Ms. McFadyen is uniquely positioned to serve as Interim Advocate, given the historical linkage between the two roles. I am confident that under her leadership, the rights of Saskatchewan's children and youth will be well-protected."

The Advocate for Children and Youth is a Statutory Officer of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. The advocate leads a team of professionals to advocate for the rights, interests, and well-being of children and youth in Saskatchewan.

The Board of Internal Economy is a statutory authority created in 1981 to emphasize the responsibilities of parliamentarians for the general administration of the Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker, who has primary responsibilities for the services and programs required by the Assembly and its members, is the Board's Chair. The Board membership includes two cabinet minister, two MLAs nominated by the Government Caucus and two MLAs nominated by the Opposition Caucus.

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Office of the Speaker

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