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**Please see the message below from Paul Pearson, current Bencher for Victoria County, regarding the upcoming Bencher Elections:**

I have had the privilege of representing Victoria County as your Bencher for the past two years. Notably, my tenure at the Law Society of BC has been dominated by the BC government's proposed revision of the *Legal Profession Act* and the governance of British Columbia lawyers. Those who have followed the numerous updates on this matter are aware that the government [likely aims to "modernize" the governance of BC lawyers](#) by reducing the number of elected lawyers overseeing the Law Society, while increasing the number of government-appointed, notary and paralegal Benchers. Robust responses to these intentions have come from the [Law Society](#), the [Victoria Bar Association](#), and the [Canadian Bar Association](#).

This Bencher election, without hyperbole, stands as the most pivotal in Law Society history. Addressing the complex challenges and strategic planning required to navigate this seismic shift in the relationship between the Law Society and the government will be formidable. I would dearly love to continue serving as a Bencher during this time. However, as a proud Crown Counsel, I work for that government. This may not be direct conflict of interest, but I view the stakes as too high to risk any limitations on planning the tactics of a response. Preserving lawyer independence and protecting the administration of justice demands the guidance of another capable individual as we navigate these uncharted waters. While we have a long history of incumbency in Victoria, I have decided, reluctantly, to not run for re-election as your Bencher.

I strongly encourage anyone interested in running for election to complete the [application form](#) and [nomination forms](#) and submit them before 5:00 pm on Monday, October 16. The challenges ahead will be substantial, and I extend my sincere appreciation to all those who step up to the task.

Rest assured, you will continue to be exceptionally well represented by Lindsay LeBlanc, who will assume the role of second vice president of the Law Society in the coming year. It is not a platitude when I say we are all fortunate to have her as an incoming leader during these times.

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