



# DEBATES OF THE SENATE

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## **CONTROLLED DRUGS AND SUBSTANCES ACT**

**BILL TO AMEND—TWELFTH REPORT OF LEGAL AND  
CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE ADOPTED—  
THIRD READING**

Speech by:

The Honourable Larry W. Campbell

Tuesday, April 4, 2017

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**Hon. Larry Campbell:** Honourable senators, I'd like to thank Senator Sinclair for stepping in for Senator Baker. He reflected well on Senator Baker and his words.

I would like to thank Member of Parliament Ron McKinnon for introducing this bill.

I have to tell you that I thought our world had changed when I introduced this in November 2016. At that time, I advised you that 600 people had died in British Columbia up until that time. By the end of 2016, we had 914 people who had died and we were averaging three people a day in British Columbia.

In the first two months of 2017, we had 219 deaths. I simply can't say enough about the ruin and the dismay that's going on in the province.

I hope that once we pass this bill today, some of these numbers will go down because, as I said before, I've been to hundreds of these deaths and in many cases I know that this person did not die alone. Somebody was there, but because of the worry about being arrested, if they're addicted and going through withdrawal and being in jail, they walked away.

Quite frankly, I can't blame them, knowing the situation that they're in.

Along with Bill C-37 that will be coming to us, I hope very soon that we'll be able to see these numbers drop. To give you an example, in 2007 we averaged 16.8 deaths every month in the province of British Columbia. In 2017, we're averaging 109. We've gone from 16 to 109. We thought we might start to see it drop off, but it hasn't. It hasn't dropped off, and not only in British Columbia; it's coming east and it's spreading across.

We're starting to see these numbers hit other communities. If senators think that this is a big city problem, I can tell that you that per capita, some of our smallest towns are suffering from this epidemic at a much higher per capita: for instance, Kelowna, Prince George, cities of this size. It is also through the Prairies in small towns, and through the East Coast in small towns. It's affecting all of us.

I wish we'd had this here sooner, but it's the process that we go through. I want to thank the committee for taking a look at this bill. I believe, with the amendment, it's making it better, and not just a better bill from the point of view of the grammatical, but a better bill from the point of view of how it will work.

I would urge every senator to vote for this. We have to stop this massacre. That's the only way to describe it. We have to stop it. If this was anything else, if this was any other medical condition we would be up in arms; we would be motivated; we would be pushing everyone to do something to keep these people alive.

I thank you for your attention.

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