



Letters from the LCC President

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At the Law Commission of Canada, the 6th of June marked three years since we opened our doors after a long hibernation. Like others at age three, the Commission is thriving, adventurous, full of energy, and looking forward to the summer season! As we celebrate our third birthday, it seems like the right moment to reflect on the past days and weeks in the form of this May-June letter.

Late spring feels like the season of annual get-togethers, meetings, and shared experience. Over the month of May this year, hockey-loving Canadians across the country came together to follow the Walter Cup and Stanley Cup play-offs. They commiserated with each other in searching for best gas prices and communicated with each other in figuring out best garden planting days. Some crossed the stage at college and university convocations and threw their hats up in the air in happy unison. Others tried out the new iced drinks at their local Tim Horton's or turned up for the annual restart of their local farmers' markets.

At the very end of May, the Law Commission was honoured to host this year's annual get-together of our counterparts from across the country. Currently composed of members from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia, the Federation of Law Reform Agencies of Canada (FOLRAC) meets each year to share priorities, projects, and plans. Since rejoining the network in 2023, the LCC has benefited from listening to, and learning from, the diverse approaches that exist with respect to reform, research, collaboration, impact, and participation.

Around a table at our Ottawa office, directors of their respective law reform agencies – referred to as “institutes” or “commissions” depending on jurisdiction – recounted highlights of the past year, acknowledged the partnerships and relationships that sustain their work, and shared challenges and successes associated with communication and consultation. We were fortunate to learn from retired Senator Brent Cotter who spoke with us about overlapping sources of law reform in



Canadian democracy, the role and impact of advocacy groups, and the interlocking elements of ecosystems that support the evolution of law. And we were treated to the insights of journalists Linda Besner (2025 Law Commission of Canada-Canadian Bar Association Journalism Fellow) and Dale Smith (journalist and frequent contributor to the Canadian Bar Association's *National Magazine*) grounded in their experience of reporting in the domain of law and justice.

The annual meeting of law reform agencies was scheduled to coincide in Ottawa with a conference entitled "Advancing People-Centred Justice in Canada: Data Sharing and Knowledge Building", organized by the Action Committee on Access to Justice. Participants spent three days focused on the importance and multi-dimensional nature of experience, participation, understanding, visibility, design, outreach and innovation. Together they shared perspectives on grounding access to justice in the needs, insights, and projects of people in all corners of Canadian life and law. Conference attendees left invited and inspired to incorporate lessons learned into their next steps in research, collaboration and reform, all with the goal of strengthening the responsiveness to the people of Canada of our country's justice ecosystem.



The first week of June brought three more annual gatherings in which the Law Commission of Canada participated. The federal government's "Community of Small Departments and Agencies" came together for a morning dedicated to learning about initiatives, directions and possibilities within the public service. Heads of agencies across government were encouraged to demonstrate energy, ambition and creative collaboration, to make space for innovative ideas, to build for tomorrow, and to take responsible risks in stewarding their projects and programs. At the end of that same day, we were proud to attend the annual President's Dinner of the Canadian Bar Association. Outgoing president Bianca Kratt was truly inspirational in her call for leadership, courage and wisdom, echoed by award recipient and recently retired Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, the Honourable Sheilah Martin. Finally, the Canadian Association of Law Teachers (CALT) held its annual meeting and conference, this year with the theme of "Creativity, Collaboration and Care", at Western University's Faculty of Law in London, Ontario. I was delighted

to share ideas on the intersecting identities of legal education and law reform with teachers and scholars who came together from 40 institutions, including 27 universities, for three intensive days of interactive roundtables and workshops.

The phenomenon of annual meetings and events reminds us that the work is never finished or fixed. We come together with purpose, according to a once-a-year rhythm and cycle, to nourish community, find support, rejoice in our diversity, and forge meaningful connections. Together, we face crises, share narratives, compare contexts, and imagine directions for the future.

As I look back over the past days and weeks, the most memorable moment came at the start of the Canadian Association of Law Teachers conference. Participants were welcomed by Elder Bruce Elijah and then invited to join in Oneida Nation dance and song. Together we formed a line at the front of a university classroom, reminded of the layers and history of this Haudenosaunee space; together we followed the steps of the dance and joined in the call and response of the songs, each telling a unique story and conveying a distinct message. The community singing and dancing, explained the leaders, keep hearts and minds active. They also reinforce the generation-to-generation nature and rhythm of teaching and learning, law and justice.

Over a post-dance coffee, the lead singer and I talked together about the power of group-based movement, about the synergies of leading and following, and about the potential of joint action to enrich individual ideas and pathways. As we head into the less-structured summer season, let us take with us what we learn from coming together, listening to each other, and sharing in collective dance. Happy 3rd birthday to the Law Commission of Canada!