

For Immediate Release

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For Love and Murray

Murray Smith and Rod Love among recipients of 27% pay hike

Calgary - NDP Opposition MLA Ray Martin released information today showing that the Stampede Caucus was a boon for more than just deputy ministers.

Under the cover of pay hikes for deputy ministers, Chief of Staff Rod Love and Alberta's envoy to Washington, former Energy Minister Murray Smith, both benefited from the 27% increases.

Mandarins at the very top got the biggest increases, while lower pay ranges got hikes of 15%, 10%, and 6%. Apart from deputy ministers, there are 65 other senior officials – all government appointees - that qualify for the massive increases.

Other perks and pensions were also quietly sweetened. Managers' pensions contribution rates were increased. The Public Service Pension Plan - for rank and file public servants - is funded 50/50 between employees and the government. But for managers, the employer contribution rates went up \$4.90 for every \$1 increase paid by managers into the MEPP.

MLAs and other government appointees also got unplanned, mid-year increases in their committee pay. Effective August 1st, committee pay will have increased 8% over the past year.

Senior officials, like deputy ministers, were previously entitled to an average of 16% in annual bonuses. But these bonuses are also likely being quietly hiked by 25%, if the Stampede Caucus followed the advice of the secretive committee that recommended the bonus hikes.

"As Klein coasts into the sunset, he's making sure his friends are well-taken care of, including Rod Love. As for Murray Smith, a patronage appointment - at a pay package of over \$250,000 on top of a \$347,000 MLA severance package, was apparently not enough," says Martin. "Smith is now getting a 27% increase to his pay, and is due for 25% more in bonus pay," adds Martin.

"Contrast these pay increases with the minimum wage. We're still among the lowest in the country," says Martin. "We're allowing child labour at fast food and retail outlets, we've got a pittance for a minimum wage, and scores of working homeless in Calgary. Meanwhile the Conservative priority is fattening their friends' pockets," concludes Martin.

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The order-in-council can be found here:

http://www.gov.ab.ca/home/Orders_in_Council/2005/705/2005_338.html

The managers' pension information can be found here: http://www.mepp.ca/plan/rate_incr_05.htm