

**Speaking Points for  
Premier Ed Stelmach**

**Announcement of Alberta's  
New Cultural Policy**

**10:30 am**

**Friday, January 25, 2008**

**Check Against Delivery**

- **Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and thanks for coming today.**
- **I'd like to extend special greetings to one of my predecessors, the Honourable Peter Lougheed.**
- **Peter and his wife Jeanne have been patrons of the arts and supporters of culture in Alberta for decades.**

- **In fact, many of the cultural programs and facilities we have today come from the era of Premier Lougheed.**
- **Today, we're building on what he started.**
- **One of my priorities as Premier is building communities. Culture has to be part of that. It's a necessary element in a vital, engaged, and vibrant society.**

- **Government has an important role in helping to create the conditions in which culture can flourish.**
- **So do Alberta's cities, towns and rural areas...community leaders and volunteers...the private sector...and of course Alberta's talented artists and cultural professionals and organizations.**
- **Alberta is a young and growing province that welcomes new people from everywhere, every day.**

- **Together, we are creating our culture – a culture that unites us, helps us better understand ourselves and each other, and gives us pride and enjoyment.**
- **Today, I am here to tell you about how our government plans to support and promote culture for years to come.**
- **We've developed a new Cultural Policy to guide our actions. It's called "The Spirit of Alberta."**

- **It outlines four goals:**
  - **Ensuring that Albertans throughout the province have access to a wide range of cultural experiences and opportunities;**
  - **Enhancing community capacity to support and promote cultural activity;**
  - **Encouraging excellence in the work of Alberta's artistic and cultural professionals and organizations; and**
  - **Fostering growth, sustainability and investment in Alberta's cultural industries.**

- **We've already taken some first steps toward these goals by increasing the tax credit for charitable donations...**
- **... and creating the new Community Spirit Fund that will provide grants to non-profit groups on a proportional basis to match charitable donations.**
- **You'll see more details of this program in the budget.**

- **I can tell you today that the budget will also include an additional \$12 million for arts and culture...**
- **...including a 30-percent increase for the Alberta Foundation for the Arts...**
- **...and an additional \$1.6 million for the Alberta Film Development Program.**

- **Our government is proud of Alberta's unique and vibrant culture, and we want it to continue to grow and flourish.**
- **We're prepared to take a leadership role, and to work with stakeholders to make that happen.**
- **I'll pass the mike to Hector Goudreau, the Minister of Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture, who'll explain how we're going to do that.**