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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MORE WOMEN WIN SEATS in ALBERTA LEGISLATURE

Edmonton/Calgary, AB-

More women will be present in the Alberta legislature after Monday's election. A total of 23 women were elected, making up 26.4% of the new legislature. This represents an increase of 5.9% from the 2008 election, when 17 women were elected. The size of the Legislature increased from 83 to 87 seats.

"We have reached a historic point in political history in Canada, now having elected Alberta's first woman Premier AND the first woman who will be Leader of Alberta's Official Opposition" noted Janice Kinch, Chair for Equal Voice – Alberta South Chapter.

In the election 27 percent of the candidates were women. Women were elected at almost the same rate that they were nominated overall. The Progressive Conservative Party had the highest rate of electing women.

Eighteen out of the 22 women nominated for the PC Party won. The success rate of 81.8% is remarkable.

The Wild Rose Party fielded 11 women candidates in its full slate of candidates, of which 3 were elected, including Leader Danielle Smith, incumbent Heather Forsyth and newcomer Kerry Towle.

The NDP re-elected Rachel Notley, the only woman elected for the party out of 41 women candidates.

The Liberal Party also re-elected 1 woman, Laurie Blakeman out of 20 women nominated for the party.

"Equal Voice applauds all the women who stepped forward to run in both the Provincial and Senate elections. Twenty-six percent of women in the Alberta Legislature is a significant achievement. The Famous Five Alberta women's legacy encourages us to further reach for new heights of political parity" added Janet Buckmaster, Chair of Equal Voice's Alberta North chapter. "We urge Premier Redford to appoint a Cabinet with strong female representation".

Among the 3 individuals elected to become Senate nominees, all carried the PC banner, and none is a woman. The sole woman who ran placed 7th in a field of 13.

The general election of 2012 has made history by being the first in Alberta's history to elect a Premier who is a woman and the first jurisdiction in Canada to have a Premier and a Leader of the Official Opposition who are women.

Dr. Jane Arscott, Equal Voice member and co-author of *Still Counting: Women in Politics Across Canada* observed that women haven't been this prominent among Canada's First Ministers since 1993 when there were three: Kim Campbell, Catherine Callbeck and Nellie Cournoyea.

Currently Canada has four female First Ministers: Premier Eva Aariak of Nunavut, Premier Kathy Dunderdale of Newfoundland and Labrador, Premier Redford and Premier Christy Clark of British Columbia.

Equal Voice is a national multi-partisan organization dedicated to the election of more women at all levels of government in Canada. Our members are women and men from all walks of life and a variety of political parties.

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