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January 30, 2014

The Honourable Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance
House of Commons
Centre Block Building - Room 435-S
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Flaherty,

The Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime (CRCVC) is a national advocacy group for crime victims. The CRCVC advocates for individual victims and their families in order to assist them in obtaining needed services, information, and resources, and presents the interests and perspectives of victims of crime to Government, at all levels. We are writing to call on you to include funding in the upcoming federal budget for the addition of a Missing Persons Index to the National DNA Databank.

The CRCVC has long supported efforts in Canada to help families who are struggling to cope with a loved one who is deemed a long-term missing person. We believe the efforts of the Peterson family through “Lindsey’s Law” to see both Missing Person and Found Human Remains indices added to the National DNA Databank is long overdue and expect to see funding finally allocated for it in the 2014 federal budget.

While Canada has a crime scene and a convicted offender DNA databank; it is used only to identify criminals, not to link DNA from missing persons with unidentified remains. The ability to collect DNA from family members of a missing person so that it can be cross-referenced with DNA from crime scenes and with unidentified human remains is crucial. Police will gain the ability to identify serial murders and make our country a safer place. Grieving families will be provided answers, victims of crimes can achieve justice and violence criminals can be put behind bars.

When a loved one goes missing, it is an extremely difficult time for the families and few support services are available to them. Having Missing Person and Found Human Remains indices as part of the DNA Databank will help bring comfort and the possibility of closure to thousands of family members.

Sincerely,

Heidi Illingworth
Executive Director

Cc: Ministers: Peter MacKay; Steven Blaney; John Duncan; Kevin Sorenson.