



WESTERN BARLEY GROWERS ASSOCIATION

A strong voice for a vibrant, market responsive barley industry in western Canada

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For Immediate Release

CWB DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS A SERIOUS BREACH OF BOARD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

Airdrie, AB - May 19, 2010: Actions and comments by a number of CWB directors concerning the recently proposed amendments to the Canadian Wheat Board Act are cause of concern for Western Canadian farmers.

Bill Toews, a grain farmer in Kane, MB. and a CWB director, told the Winnipeg Free Press he was one of seven elected directors of the CWB who voted against a resolution supporting new legislation on the CWB electors' list. According to the Free Press article, Toews said he didn't support the idea on principle because it was (in his view) undemocratic.

Although the CWB board supports the proposed bill through a majority vote, Toews and other un-named CWB directors reportedly acted against the interests of their own board and sent letters to Opposition MPs urging them not to support the bill.

The bill concerns the CWB electors' list which is currently made up of individuals and corporations that have a CWB Delivery Permit Book, many of whom are not farmers. The proposed changes to the CWB Act introduced in the House of Commons May 14, would make the list "just farmers" and therefore making any vote "just farmers" and the results more in the interests of farmers and not non-farmers.

"This is important legislation for anyone interested in farmer governance of the CWB", says Brian Otto, President of Western Barley Growers Association (WBGA).

"Troubling to the WBGA is Toews' publicizing how CWB directors voted on the resolution", says Otto. "By commenting on how directors voted and sending letters to Federal MP's urging their opposition to the proposed legislation, Toews and other directors are undermining the interests of the CWB and are contravening standard governance requirements of a board member. This is a serious breach of board governance policy and the WBGA is raising this issue with the CWB. It is the responsibility of any CWB director, to publicly support decisions made at the board table whether they are in agreement with the decision or not".

"When we, as farmers, elect directors to the board of the CWB, we expect mature and responsible actions. Toews and these other dissenting directors have failed all those that voted for them", says Otto.

The decision by the CWB board to support the 40 tonne minimum change was arrived at by a democratic vote at the board table. It is hypocritical for a board member to speak about democracy when they do not support the democratic decisions of their own board. If they wish to publicly oppose board decisions, they should first tender their resignation. This would be the honourable thing to do.

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