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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exploratory Committee Urges O'Leary to Join the CPC Leadership Race

TORONTO, ONTARIO – January 12, 2017. Today, Kevin O'Leary was urged to enter the Conservative Party leadership race by his Exploratory Committee. The Committee, chaired by conservative strategist Mike Coates, was launched in December to advise O'Leary on a path to victory that would cover three key areas: an ability to recruit new members, to raise sufficient funds to finance a campaign and to establish whether existing Party members would be attracted to an O'Leary candidacy.

“We have received overwhelming support from across Canada from potential new members and existing Party members for an O'Leary candidacy,” said Coates. “The Committee sees there is a clear path to victory for him to win.” In the short time since we launched his website we've had over 35,000 people contact him to urge him to run. Moreover, our informal outreach to organizers and fundraisers across Canada were similarly encouraging.”

O'Leary thanked his Committee for their hard work, as well as the tens of thousands of Canadians who took the time to send in their support. O'Leary will deliberate on their findings over the next few days, and consequently will not be participating in the upcoming French Leadership debate.

“Communication is what TV is all about. I'm on television programming that has won three Emmys, two Gemini Awards, and two Critics' Choice Awards,” O'Leary said. “When I do something I bring my A game and don't like wasting anyone's time. I grew up in Montreal and am a proud Canadian. I am committed to learning French again. Out of respect for Quebec and French Canadians, I feel it makes more sense to abstain from the French debate until I am more proficient. Needless to say, I will be watching to see how everyone else does.”

The Exploratory Committee stressed that Canada's economy is in jeopardy, and Canadians and Party members are looking for someone who can bring a fresh perspective based on a track record of success outside of politics.

“There is a yearning for someone who is not a career politician,” said Coates. “Voters are looking for someone who knows how to create jobs. As a proud Canadian businessman, O'Leary will offer real leadership to jumpstart the economy and create growth.”

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Background Information:

- Cover letter from Exploratory Committee Chair
- Example of comments received from Canadians
- Exploratory Committee Membership

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2. **Canada's economy is in jeopardy, and Canadians and Party members are looking for someone who can bring a fresh perspective based on a track record of success outside of politics.**

Quite frankly, there is a yearning for someone who is not a career politician, and has high name recognition as someone who knows what it takes to create jobs and be responsible for meeting a payroll and can make a strong and forceful case about our economic future.

3. **Canadians are looking for someone who can broaden the base of the party and who is willing to fight for all Canadians regardless of geography or identity.**

Your appeal crosses both rural and urban Canada and we believe you can convert your high profile into a winning a campaign. In particular, your ability to speak directly to Millennials and relate to their concerns about their job prospects is an exciting opportunity that the Party would like to take advantage of.

Kevin, these last few weeks have been an exciting time for us, and your Committee is eager to see you get into the race.

Sincerely,



Mike Coates

Committee Chair

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Backgrounder: Sample of Comments Received

In the last two and a half weeks over 35,000 Canadians have contacted the Advisory Committee and indicated they would purchase a Conservative Party membership to support you. Below is an example of some of the comments we received.

"... you MUST throw your hat into the ring and get in the game as you most certainly will be the next prime minister of Canada, the people are sick of politicians picking out pockets until were broke"

- John Romano

"Very simply. As a conservative member & proud Canadian, I support a Kevin O'Leary leadership campaign. If you are interested in active support, call me."

- Karl Doucas

"I am contacting you from Calgary, the heart of Canada's energy industry, to urge you to run for the Conservative Party's leadership. For God and all of our sake, do it man! We are in desperate need for a businessman to run this country."

- Len Baltoiuz

"YES- you can win both the leadership and the next election based on your proposals to date."

- Joel Ginsberg

"My opinion is that you should run. The only way you will be able to say you did all you could to help this Country is by throwing your name in the Hat. We need a "rock star" to compete with their 'rock star.'"

- Bill Angove

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Backgrounder - Committee Members

Mike Coates

The chair of Kevin's exploratory committee is Mike Coates, a long time conservative activist, who most recently headed up Mr. Harper's debate prep and strategy team for his leadership campaign and three successive elections. Professionally Mike was CEO of H+K Canada for 19 yrs, before becoming H+K's CEO of the Americas out of New York. He now is a vice Chairman residing in Ottawa.

Mike Harris

Mike Harris became the twenty-second Premier of Ontario following a landslide election victory. Four years later, the voters of Ontario re-elected Mike Harris and his team — making him the first Ontario Premier in more than 30 years to form a second consecutive majority government.

After leaving office in 2002, Mr. Harris formed his own consulting firm. As President of Steane Consulting Ltd., Mr. Harris serves as an advisor to numerous Canadian companies including Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP where he currently serves as Senior Business Advisor.

Ken Hughes

Ken Hughes is a successful businessman and entrepreneur who has also served with accomplishment in public life: Member of Parliament - 1988-1993; Founding Chair, Alberta Health Services – 2008-2011; Member of Legislature of Alberta – 2012-2014 (Minister of Energy, Municipal Affairs).

Guy Lauzon

First elected as the Member of Parliament for Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry in 2004, and subsequently in 2006, 2008, 2011 and 2015, Guy Lauzon is a well-respected member of the Conservative Caucus. Having served 7 years as the National Conservative Caucus Chair, he worked weekly with Prime Minister Stephen Harper, members of Cabinet, and Caucus colleagues to advance policy and legislation for a better Canada.

Marjory LeBreton

Marjory LeBreton, long time Conservative activist. Retired from Senate of Canada, July, 2015. Leader of the Government in the Senate and Cabinet Minister 2006 -2013. Past National Chair and current Board Member of MADD Canada.

Rick Perkins

Rick has been a member of the Party for more than 30 years and has served as the Party's National Treasurer, on three national campaign committees, as a candidate, and is currently the

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VP for the South Shore St. Margaret's Conservative Party of Canada EDA. Rick is a marketing executive and entrepreneur and is an 8th generation Nova Scotian.

Perry Dellelce

Perry is the Co-Founder and Managing Partner of Wildeboer Dellelce LLP, Canada's leading corporate finance transactional law firm. Perry is also the Past Chair and current member of the Board of Directors of the Sunnybrook Hospital Foundation and is now serving as the Chair of the Defy the Conventional Capital Campaign for the University of Ottawa.

Todd A. Halpern

Todd A. Halpern is President of Halpern Enterprises. He is Board Champion of the Krembil Neuroscience Centre Campaign, the Brain Campaign, the Arthritis Campaign and the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre Campaign. He has served on the Board the Toronto General & Western Hospital Foundation since 2005.

Mr. Halpern is the Chair of the Grand Cru Culinary Wine Festival, which benefits research at University Health Network. He is also a member of the Nominating and Governance Committee.

Sara MacIntyre

Sara has been involved in Conservative politics for years. She served as Press Secretary to Prime Minister Stephen Harper from 2009-2012, including the successful 2011 general election. In Opposition, Sara worked as a researcher in the Leaders Office for the Canadian Alliance from 2002-2004. She also briefly worked with the BC Liberals and now lives in Toronto and works as a Corporate Communications Consultant.