

**Speaking Notes**  
**The Hon. Noël A. Kinsella**  
**Speaker of the Senate**

**Reception on the occasion of the Retirement of the  
Honourable Marilyn Trenholme Counsell**

**February 5, 2009**

Honourable Senators,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to welcome you here today on the occasion of the retirement of our now former colleague, the Honourable Marilyn Trenholme Counsell. The Senate was enriched by her presence over the last five years, as she proved herself once again to be a devoted worker who had much to contribute, but with perhaps not enough time in which to accomplish everything on her to-do list. My suspicion is that 20 years would not have been enough. She is a distinguished Canadian and, I am proud to say, a fellow New-Brunswicker, who arrived in the Senate with a strong and varied background which had medicine and politics as central focal points.

A consultant with the Department of Health and Social Services in New Brunswick, a senior nutritionist in Ontario's Department of Health, Senator Trenholme Counsell worked as a general practitioner at the Toronto General Hospital and the Sackville Memorial Hospital in New Brunswick. Her career illustrates a long history of working with others and working for the health and improvement of others.

Her formal political career began in 1987 when she was elected to the New Brunswick Legislature to represent the riding of Tantramar. As a member of the Legislature, she served on numerous committees and chaired the Committee on School Integration. Her years of service in government culminated in her appointment as New Brunswick's first Minister of State for the Family. In recognition of the initiatives of her ministry, the United Nations presented the Province of New Brunswick with the 1995 International Year of the Family Award.

Shortly after becoming Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick in 1997, her Honour claimed early childhood literacy as her special cause. Her support of *Born to Read/Le goût de lire* resulted in the program reaching across the province. Every newborn in New Brunswick receives babies' first books at the hospital to bring home. She also initiated the Lieutenant Governor's Early Childhood Literacy Awards to recognize women and men throughout New Brunswick who make outstanding contributions to the lives of young children.

Senator Trenholme Counsell was named to the Senate of Canada in 2003. Much of her work over the course of her five years in the Senate reflects her profound interest and understanding of early childhood development, health and literacy. She served on a number of committees, including the Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee and the Social, Science and Technology Committee. She was also co-chair of the Joint Committee on the Library of Parliament.

In addition to her Senate duties, Sen. Trenholme Counsell continued to offer her support to numerous institutes for the arts and for the promotion of scientific research. Some of these organizations include: the Atlantic Ballet Theatre, Child Alliance PEI, Jeunesses Musicales NB, Family Resource Programs (FRP Canada), Library Program School District 2, NB Coalition of Literacy, NB Foundation for the Arts, NB Hospice Palliative Care Association, NB Learning Disabilities Association, NB Youth Orchestra, Institute of Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis (IMHA-CIHR) and the Canadian Cancer Society (NB).

Senator Trenholme Counsell served the people of New Brunswick and the people of Canada throughout her career, and in doing so, established herself as a leader, particularly for women in medicine. She is the first and only woman doctor to be appointed to the Senate of Canada. Throughout her all too brief time in the Senate, she has been a wonderful contributor to both the work of the Senate and to the collegial atmosphere we generally enjoy. At this time, I would like to invite the Honourable Marilyn Trenholme Counsell to say a few words.