

Alberta's man in Washington left with \$105K

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[CBC News](#)

Murray Smith, Alberta's former trade representative in Washington, D.C., pocketed \$105,276 as a termination allowance when he abruptly left the post six months early, CBC News has learned.

Aside from Smith's base salary of \$223,000, a condo purchased by the province, and a car and driver that were already public knowledge, his contract with the provincial government reveals he was entitled to:

- A termination allowance of \$105,276, equivalent to six months' salary.
- \$55,000 for memberships.
- Five weeks of holidays per year.
- Accept other paid positions as long as they didn't conflict with his job.

Smith quit as Alberta's energy minister and started his new job promoting the province's trade and oilsands potential in the U.S. capital on Jan. 1, 2004. He left six months before the end of his three-year contract to take a job in the private sector.

As the former minister of intergovernmental affairs, current Premier Ed Stelmach signed Smith's contract.

For almost three years, the Alberta government refused to release the terms and conditions of Smith's employment and fought a freedom of information request for details made by CBC News. Three months ago, the privacy commissioner ordered the province to hand over the information.

"They should not be blocking information that would show how much taxpayers are paying for this, what the contract stipulates," said Scott Hennig of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. "I mean, he's a public servant using public tax dollars. This is clearly public information."

The government may have fought releasing the contract details because it was embarrassed by the agreement, Hennig suggested.

Smith's contract required him to report four times a year on performance targets. Hennig said he'd be interested in finding out what the targets were and if they were met.



Murray Smith, Alberta's former trade representative in Washington, D.C., received a \$105,276 termination allowance when he quit. (CBC)