

Gary G. Mar Q.C.
Minister-Counsellor, Government of Alberta
Embassy of Canada

Gary Mar was appointed on December 3, 2007 as the Official Representative (Minister-Counsellor) of the Province of Alberta to the United States of America. He leads the Alberta Office in Washington, D.C., co-located in the Canadian Embassy.



Prior to his diplomatic posting, Gary served for 14 years as a Member of the Legislative Assembly in the Province of Alberta, Canada, winning four consecutive elections in Calgary, Alberta. Gary held several Cabinet portfolios – Community Development; Health and Wellness; Education; Environment; and International and Intergovernmental Relations.

As Minister of Environment, Gary served as co-chair of Climate Change Central, a public/private partnership formed in response to the international agreement on climate change. He led efforts to create a new provincial park in the Spray Valley to protect this unique and vulnerable area of Alberta's Rocky Mountains.

As Minister of Education, Gary introduced *First Things First... Our Children*, an initiative that focussed on school children of all ages. It made a commitment to ensuring children can read well by grade 3, and focussed on high standards for junior and senior high school students, keeping them in school and ensuring they have the skills they need when they graduate.

As Minister of Health and Wellness, Gary introduced a series of reforms to Alberta's health care system, including a province-wide electronic health record system and an innovative pilot project to reduce wait times for hip and knee surgeries.

As Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations, Gary led the highly successful *Alberta at the Smithsonian* project in 2006 which included Alberta as the first Canadian province ever featured at the *Smithsonian Folklife Festival*. Leading up to the Folklife Festival, *Alberta Week in Washington* included forums and meetings between Alberta leaders and U.S. decision makers and policy makers in Washington, D.C.

Before serving Albertans as an elected Member of the Alberta Legislature, Gary had a broad general practice including criminal, civil, corporate, commercial and real estate law in Calgary, Alberta. He was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1994, a honorary designation conferred by the Crown in Commonwealth countries and recognized by the courts.

Gary has a Bachelor of Commerce (Finance) degree from the University of Calgary, and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Alberta.

Gary and his wife Nancy have three children, Lauren, Jared and Mackenzie.

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