

September 26, 2016



BPW Canada

www.bpwcanada.com

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Trudeau:

The Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women respectfully submits the enclosed Brief for your consideration. The items herein represent the concerns brought forward by our members from Clubs across the country. Resolutions were presented, discussed, debated and accepted at the 45th Biennial Convention held in Calgary in August 2016.

As a non-partisan organization, we have worked for over 85 years to urge governments to continue the inclusion of equal rights for women in legislation. It is through this process of voicing the issues outlined in this Brief and engaging open dialogue with your government that we can together build a strong and thriving Canada.

We respectfully request that you and the appropriate Ministers review our resolutions and be available to meet with our delegation at a time in keeping with your schedules. A member of the delegation will follow this correspondence with a personal contact and confirm the preferred meeting times and dates.

We have forwarded this Brief to the Leaders of the Opposition and the Ministers addressed in our resolutions so that they may be apprised of our positions on the topics herein.

We are very interested in your comments concerning the enclosed Brief.

Yours truly,

JGAbdulla

Jenny Gulamani-Abdulla
President 2016-2018,
BPW Canada
Email: president@bpwcanada.com

Copy:

The Honourable Rona Ambrose

House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0A6

The Honourable Thomas Mulcair

House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0A6

**The Honourable Bill Morneau,
Minister of Finance**

House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0A6

**The Honourable Jane Philpott,
Minister of Health**

House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0A6

**The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos,
Minister of Families, Children and Social Development**

House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0A6

**The Honourable MaryAnn Mihychuk,
Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour**

House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0A6

**The Honourable Amarjeet Sohi,
Minister of Infrastructure and Communities**

House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0A6

**The Honourable Carla Qualtrough,
Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities**

House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0A6

**The Honourable Patty Hajdu,
Minister of Status of Women**

House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0A6

**Submission
to
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JUSTIN TRUDEAU**

PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA

BY



**The Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women
*La Fédération Canadienne des Femmes de Carrières
Commerciales et Professionnelles***

Member of the International Federation of BPW Clubs

bpwcanada@bpwcanada.com

www.bpwcanada.com

**Working towards improving economic, political, social and
employment conditions for Women in Canada
*“Women Working for Working Women”***

September 2016

Table of Contents

RESOLUTION #1	1
Gender Neutrality for the CPP & Other Public Pensions	1
RATIONALE	1
RESOLUTION #2	2
Alcohol's Correlation to Breast Cancer	2
RATIONALE	2
RESOLUTION #3	3
Call for a National Senior's Strategy	3
RATIONALE	4
RESOLUTION #4	5
Supporting Women in Non-traditional Careers	5
RATIONALE	5
RESOLUTION #5	6
Re-Affirming - Declaration of a National Equal Pay Day	6
RATIONALE	6

INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW Canada) is an equality-seeking group working towards improving the economic, political, social and employment conditions for women. We are “**Women Working for Working Women**”. Our membership includes women from a variety of professions and occupations, including women entrepreneurs. BPW Canada develops the professional and leadership potential of women through education, awareness, advocacy and mentoring within the supportive network of BPW.

In 1930, BPW Canada was a founding member of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women’s Clubs. BPW International has Consultative 1 Status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council and is the recognized voice of working women in over 95 countries worldwide.

For more than 85 years we have advocated for women’s rights at all levels and have played a significant role in achieving advancements for a just and equal society. For more information on our achievements, please visit our website at www.bpwcanada.com.

Currently, local BPW Clubs across Canada offer a range of opportunities and activities for members to enhance their: Awareness, Advocacy & Action on women’s issues; Leadership Skills & Career Advancement; Supportive Networking; and Personal Development.

The BPW Canada Convention was held on August 12-14, 2016. At our Conventions and Annual General Meetings we decide our policy. Resolutions contained in this document were initiated at the club level, researched and formulated, and brought to the 2016 Convention where they were discussed and debated. Once approved, these resolutions become part of the official policy of BPW Canada and are herein presented for your consideration.

The issues raised by BPW Canada are issues of concern to our society as a whole. We look forward to the opportunity to meet with our federal government representatives to present our resolutions and our concerns in more detail.

Jenny Gulamani-Abdulla, BA, JD, RCIC, President, BPW Canada

Amanda McLaren, Secretary, BPW Canada

Linda Davis, Resolutions Chair, BPW Canada

RESOLUTION #1

Gender Neutrality for the Canada Pension Plan and Other Public Pensions

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada Minister of Finance to apply the principle of gender-based analysis of the Canada Pension Plan and reviews, and in any special reviews of these plans and;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada Minister of Finance to prepare a *Gender Implications Report* on any proposed policy options for wide public release and consultation before any changes are adopted.

RATIONALE

The Canada Pension Plan (CPP) is a contributory, earnings-defined social insurance program. It is one of two major components of Canada's public retirement income system, with the other component being Old Age Security.

In 2002, the Status of Women Canada produced a gender-based analysis of CPP and other government pension plans. That report recognized differences between men and women in their monthly CPP benefits, which economically disadvantages women in their retirement years and affects their quality of life. The report recommends that gender analysis become a standard component of government review processes and that, before any changes are adopted by federal and/or provincial governments, a gender implications report be released publicly for wide consultation. The report also suggests that, if increased contributions are deemed necessary at some point, an increase in the yearly basic exemption should be considered before a rate change is adopted.

In the 2015 federal election campaign, the platforms of various federal parties indicated the need for a major review of the Canada Pension Plan and other components of the retirement income system. Various options have been proposed and more are likely forthcoming.

Sources

Menard, Jean-Claude (2013). Actuarial Report (26th) on the Canada Pension Plan. (Ottawa: Government of Canada, Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions). Retrieved from <http://www.osfi-bsif.gc.ca/eng/oca-bac/ar-ra/cpp-rpc/pages/cpp26.aspx>.

Kesselman, Jonathan (2010). Expanding Canada Pension Plan Retirement Benefits: Assessing Big CPP Proposals. University of Calgary SPP Research Papers, 3(6). Retrieved from <http://www.policyschool.ca/authors/kesselman-jonathan/>

Sayeed, Adil (2002). The 1997 Canada Pension Plan Changes: Implications for Women and Men. (Ottawa: Status of Women Canada). Retrieved from <http://publications.gc.ca/site/archievee-archived.html?url=http://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/SW21-98-2002E.pdf>.

RESOLUTION #2

Alcohol's Correlation to Breast Cancer and other Health Related Risks

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, and the Minister of Health to recommend that the Canadian College of Physicians & Surgeons provide current information to physicians on the health risks associated with the use of alcohol, to their female patients, particularly the correlation between alcohol use and breast cancer, so that they may communicate these well documented health related risks to their patients.

RATIONALE

Research indicates that there are gender differences in the way men and women's bodies metabolize alcohol making women more vulnerable to alcohol related health risks. These differences have often been attributed in the past simply to gender differences in weight and size. However, it is increasingly apparent from studies that physiological differences, exist as well. Women have less gastrointestinal and liver enzymes that metabolize alcohol. As a result women absorb more alcohol into their bloodstream than men. A woman's body contains less body water and more fatty tissue than a man. As fat retains alcohol and water dilutes it, alcohol remains at higher concentrations for longer period of time in a woman's body.

Canada's low-risk alcohol drinking Guidelines indicate 0-2 standard drinks per day for women and no more than 10 standard drinks per week. For men the standard is 0-3 drinks per day and 15 drinks per week. Research indicates that at even one drink per day on average a women's risk of getting liver-cirrhosis increases by 139% compared with 26% in men.

Due to the high correlation between alcohol and breast cancer, (2 drinks – 27%, 3-4 drinks – 52%, 5-6 drinks – 93%, and +6 drinks 193%), it is recommended, that women with a family history of breast cancer choose to stop drinking completely, or if they continue to drink, to limit their alcohol intake to no more than two drinks per week. For women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer it is recommended that they cease all alcohol intake altogether.

Research consistently shows that drinking alcoholic beverages, beer, wine and liquor increases the levels of estrogen and other hormones associated with hormone-receptor-positive breast cancer. Alcohol also may increase breast cancer risk by damaging DNA in cells.

Sources

Women & Alcohol: The Hidden Risks of Drinking: <http://www.helpguide.org/harvard/women-and-cohol.htm>.

Canada's Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines, Communicating Alcohol-Related Health Risks, Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, (2013)

Developed on behalf of the National Alcohol Strategy Advisory Committee, ISBN 978 -1-77178-016-2

National Alcohol Strategy Advisory Committee, (2011), Ottawa, Ont. Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse.

RESOLUTION #3

Call for a National Seniors Strategy

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada to undertake a multi-pronged approach to the development and implementation of a National Seniors Strategy with the Minister of Health, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, and Minister of Status of Women.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada and specifically the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities and Minister of Status of Women to create a comprehensive National Seniors Strategy that ensures older Canadians have access to the care they need in a culturally sensitive manner and environment within which they can thrive. The strategy needs to have two interdependent foci: development of communities that value the elderly and the development of appropriate care and supports for older Canadians living in our communities. Specifically:

- Healthy aging: focus on social determinants of health such as adequate income, housing and food security, and opportunity for social connections,
- Care: access to appropriate primary, acute and specialized geriatric care, high quality home and community care, long term care, and palliative and end-of-life services;
- Care giver supports: recognition and support for informal care givers, and
- National standards and leadership: Share and mandate evidence-informed strategies and support the establishment of common standards and benchmarks with targets, measures, and national reporting;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada and specifically the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Minister of Health, and Colleges and Institutes Canada to develop training and knowledge adoption strategies around the care of the elderly to ensure that older Canadians have access to the right care, provided by properly trained care providers with a minimal wait time.

RATIONALE

Our current healthcare system was designed over 50 years ago while the average age in Canada was 27 and most Canadians did not live beyond their 60s. Today, the average age in Canada is 47 and the number of Canadians 65 and older will double over the next twenty years.

Supporting older Canadians to age in their place of choice depends on having access to appropriate care services when and where they need them. Over the last decade, there has been a significant reorientation of health care delivery from institutional-based settings toward more home and community-based settings. The cost to the Canadian economy from loss of productivity due to caregiving responsibilities is \$1.3 billion per year. One study of Canadian caregivers found that 73% were women.

Supporting the spread of innovative solutions and best practices that better enable the provision of high quality care and access to care providers closer to home will enable broader system's savings that can further ensure its overall sustainability, and will deliver significantly improved patient and system outcomes and costs.

Sources

Canadian Medical Association. 2015 National Report Card: Canadian Views on a National Seniors' Health Care Strategy Report. August 2015.

Alliance for a National Seniors Strategy. An Evidence-Informed National Seniors' Strategy for Canada. 2nd Edition. National Institute on Aging. January 2016.

Institute for Research on Public Policy Task Force on Aging. Designing a National Seniors Strategy for Canada. October 7, 2015. Institute for Research on Public Policy.

RESOLUTION #4

Supporting Women in Non-traditional Careers

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada and in particular the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour and Minister of Status of Women to collaborate with industry and private sector leaders, trades programs, organized labour, as well as with women already working in these skilled trades and other stakeholders, to develop, review and enact policies and practices to support women in non-traditional careers such as the skilled trades.

RATIONALE

Women are largely under-represented in non-traditional skilled trades. Currently skilled trades' workers are in high demand, and the Canada's labour market suffers from an acute shortage of skilled workers. A 2012 report by CIBC World Markets suggests that as much as one-fifth of the labour market does not have enough qualified workers. Estimates in the mining, oil and gas, and construction sectors forecast labour shortages ranging from 116,800 to as many as 300,000 workers over the next decade.

Even though women's overall participation in the workforce has significantly increased, women continue to disproportionately experience low-income conditions and bleak retirement prospects. In fact, low-income women in Canada face a larger wage gap when compared to their male counterparts than low-income women in most other OECD ("Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development") countries. Getting more women into skilled trades positions can be part of the solution to changing this equation.

Sources

1984 BPW Canada Resolution on Non-Traditional Skill Programs

Minister of Status of Women Mandate Letter by Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau Kharlamova Arina, "Why Are There So Few Women Working in Skilled Trades?," www.talentegg.ca (March 12, 2012).

Smith Marcia, "More Women in Skilled Trades is a Win-Win," *The Globe and Mail* (July 18, 2014).

Tal Benjamin, "The Haves and Have Nots of Canada's Labour Market," *CIBC World Markets Report, In Focus* (December 3, 2012).

Mas Susana, "Apprenticeship Ad's Claim of Skilled Trades Shortfall Open to Question," *CBC News* (January 11, 2015), www.cbc.ca

Women Building Futures skilled trades program in Edmonton, Alberta, www.womenbuildingfutures.com

Gender Wage Gap, www.stats.OECD.org

Finishing Trades, Institute of British Columbia (February 17, 2015) (based on 2006 Statistics Canada Data).

"Women's Representation and Participation in the Labour Force," Status of Women Canada Fact Sheet: Economic Security, (February 25, 2015), www.swc-cfc.gc.ca

RESOLUTION #5

Declaration of a National Equal Pay Day in Canada

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that BPW Canada reaffirms the 2014 and 2015 Resolutions “Declaration of a National Equal Pay Day in Canada” by ***re-urging*** the Government of Canada to declare (the use of the date) March 18 (or the date calculated yearly based on the annual income of Canadian women and men) as Equal Pay Day (to mark the additional number of working days that women must work longer than men in a given year, by announcing a nationally calculated annual stat on that date) the end of 420 days that Canadian women must work compared to the 365 days that men work performing the same job to earn the same wage.

RATIONALE

According to the World Economic Forum Report of 2015, Canada ranks 30th out of 145 countries where the overall gender gap is concerned but falls to rank 80th when it comes to “wage equality for similar work.” Despite Equal Pay legislation, equal pay for equal work is far from reality in Canada. Women working full-time still earn an average of 72 cents for every dollar earned by men. In Alberta, the gender wage gap is the worst in Canada, where an average woman’s income in the province is just 58% of the average man’s total take home pay.

Women’s lower pay results in lower pension, insurance and merit payouts as well as lower sick benefits. We know that today, more households are headed by single women and that women live longer than men. The gender wage gap is and will continue to lead women (and in their families) into poverty in their retirement years. A 2015 United Nations Human Rights report raised concerns about “the persistent inequalities between women and men” in Canada, including “the high level of the pay gap” and its disproportionate effect on low-income women, visible minority women, and indigenous women.

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives forecasts that at this rate, it will take over 200 years to close the gender wage gap. We must work collaboratively to raise awareness, encourage employers to review their hiring, and promotion policies, compensation packages, as well as their employment standards and practices to effectively narrow the gender wage gap.

Countries such as the UK, the USA, Australia, Japan, France, Argentina, Germany and South Korea, among others, have already declared Equal Pay Day nationally.

Sources

World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report 2015 (10th Anniversary Ed.) Retrieved from <http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR2015/cover.pdf>.

“The Facts About The Gender Wage Gap In Canada,” Canadian Women’s Foundation, www.canadianwomen.org (and sources cited therein).

Lahey, Kathleen A., “The Alberta Disadvantage: Gender, Taxation and Income Inequality,” (Parkland Institute Report, Mar 5, 2015).

United Nations Office of the High Commission for Human Rights. “Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Canada,” 2015, p.2. http://www.tbinternet.ohchr.org/_treatybodyexternal.

McInturff, K., “Closing Canada’s Gender Gap: Year 2240 Here We Come!” Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) (April 2013). Retrieved from <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/closing-canadas-gender-gap>