

**THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF ONTARIO  
LE CONSEIL DES FEMMES DE LA PROVINCE D'ONTARIO**

**ANNUAL BRIEF**

**FOR PRESENTATION TO  
THE GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO  
THE HONOURABLE DOUG FORD, PREMIER**



**Edeltraud Neal, President**

**Maide Yazar, Vice-President Resolutions**

**The Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell  
Lieutenant Governor of Ontario  
Honorary President, Provincial Council of Women of Ontario**

**November 2018**

**BRIEF TO THE GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO**

## **PROFILE OF COUNCIL**

The Provincial Council of Women of Ontario (PCWO) was founded in 1923 by the Ontario Committee of the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC), which was founded in 1893. PCWO is a member of NCWC, and the International Council of Women established in 1888.

### **PCWO'S FEDERATED MEMBERS**

#### **LOCAL COUNCILS**

London and Area Council of Women

Ottawa Council of Women

Niagara District Council of Women

Toronto & Area Council of Women

#### **STUDY GROUP**

Oakville and Area

#### **PROVINCIALY ORGANIZED SOCIETIES**

Association of Early Childhood Educators - Ontario

Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Ontario

Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario

Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario

Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association

Ontario Dental Hygienists' Association

Ontario Home Economics Association

Polish Canadian Women's Federation

Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada – Eastern Executive

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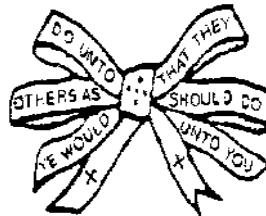
## PREAMBLE

The Provincial Council of Women of Ontario (PCWO) is pleased to present its 2018 Annual Brief to the Government of Ontario and looks forward to hearing of the actions planned by the Premier and the appropriate Government Ministries to address our concerns.

This is the 95<sup>th</sup> Annual Brief presented to the Government of Ontario. Over the past decades the PCWO has been a leader in bringing the Government's attention to matters of concern to many Ontarians.

Established in 1923, as an affiliate of the National Council of Women (1893) the aim of the Council is to work for the betterment of conditions pertaining to women, family, community and society. PCWO is composed of 4 Local Councils, 9 Provincially Organized Societies and 1 Study Group.

This year, PCWO will be available on **Tuesday, November 27, 2018, from 9:15 to 10:15 a.m. and from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. in Room 230, second floor of the Legislative Building** to present our Brief to the Government and our members. We look forward to a dialogue with the appropriate Ministers or their representatives, and the responses of other political parties, on the content of the resolutions and on-going issues, which are presented in this Brief.



.1893.

In 2018 the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario celebrates its 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, whereas the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) marks the 125<sup>th</sup> year since its founding. The National Council of Women was founded in 1893 by Lady Ishbel Aberdeen, wife of the Governor General, together with the Dominion Women's Temperance Union, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Missionary Society of Canada, the Dominion Order of King's Daughters and the Dominion Women's Enfranchisement Association. Dr. John Bourinot drafted the Constitution. The motto for all Councils is the Golden Rule, expressed on the historic insignia of the tied bow. Many civic, religious, professional, and political groups would join the non-sectarian, non-partisan Councils of Women "to further the application of the Golden Rule to society, customs and law".

## **THE RESOLUTIONS PROCESS**

PCWO speaks only on policies approved by the membership through the resolutions process. Each year our Federates, i.e. the Local Councils and the Provincially Organized Societies, research areas of concern to them, such as economics, education, environment, health and safety, housing and land use, justice, mass media and culture, seniors, and status of women. Based on their research findings they prepare resolutions which are then circulated to all PCWO federated organizations for study and input.

Each resolution must include appropriate background material to substantiate the merits of what is proposed. For brevity, the background material is not included in this Brief. The resolutions are then discussed by the delegates from each federate present at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), possibly amended and voted on. Some resolutions are Updates of policies adopted in previous years, and are noted as such. There may also be Emergency Resolutions dealing with issues that require urgent attention. These are brought forward directly to the AGM by an expedited procedure. The grassroots process, following basic democratic principles, produces policies that PCWO can act upon.

The resolutions in this Brief were approved at the 2018 AGM, which was held in Oakville in April, for presentation to the Government of Ontario.



The Honourable Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building  
Queen's Park, Toronto

November 9, 2018

Dear Mr. Ford,

During the last 95 years, generations of Ontario women (and men) on farms, in small towns and in the larger cities have joined their efforts in the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario (PCWO) to improve the lives of Ontario women, their families, their communities and society. So it is humbling to submit to you the 95<sup>th</sup> PCWO Annual Brief. We also want to recognize gratefully, the generations of men and women who have pioneered and built this great prosperous Province. And we can proudly say, that the Councils of Women have been an important part of that building process.

Every year, with their Annual Brief they have let the Ontario Government of the day know, where they saw improvements to be made to benefit women and families as well as civic life. They also thought on what the government could do about it. For PCWO, all public affairs are "women's issues". Over the years, PCWO has built up an important body of policies to improve conditions in all areas that affect legislation and regulations pertaining to women and families: health, jobs, education, child care, environment, community safety, pay & pensions, seniors, legal status etc. Thanks to Ontario's democratic system, we have been able to communicate these policies at our Semi-Annual Meetings at Queen's Park to the members of the Ontario Government and to the MPPs of all three political parties.

We invite you to drop in at your convenience at Room 230 at the Legislative Building on November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018 between 9:15 am and 4:00pm to meet with our members, and perhaps share your Government's approach to improving the lives of women and families in Ontario.

This brief will again deal with concerns of women, families and community. It will contain points of ongoing issues, and the new PCWO policy resolutions adopted in April 2018 which are added to our mandate and allow us to speak out on common concerns of our member organizations. For your convenience we are providing a summary of our recommendations below. The full text of the resolutions and expanded descriptions of ongoing issues follow. An index and the text of our policies for the last 45 years can be found on our website [www.pcwocanada.org](http://www.pcwocanada.org)

The Provincial Council of Women of Ontario is a non-partisan, non-sectarian, member-funded organization. We receive no government funds. PCWO is composed of 4 Local Councils, 9 Provincially Organized Societies and 1 Study Group. We are a member of the National Council of Women of Canada (1893) and the International Council of Women.

We hope that you and your Government will be able to give some consideration to our policy recommendations for women and families in Ontario.

Sincerely,

Edeltraud Neal, President PCWO

## **Summary of Recommendations of the 95<sup>th</sup> PCWO Annual Brief to the Ontario Government**

### **RESOLUTIONS 2018**

#### **Fragrance and Scent Free Policy for Schools and Child Care Facilities**

**Resolved #1** that the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario adopt as policy that all educational and daycare environments be fragrance/scent-free; and be it further

**Resolved # 2** that the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario urge the Government of Ontario to enact legislation to provide an indoor environment in all child care, daycare, elementary and secondary school facilities that are as free from fragrances, perfumes and scents as possible by:

- a) not allowing the use of scented personal care products within these facilities at any time by faculty, staff, students and the public users of these facilities, and employees, and
- b) requiring all materials used for cleaning and decontamination to be fragrance/scent-free; and be it further resolved

**Resolved #3** that students, parents and visitors be informed of this policy through signs posted in school buildings, oral communication and promotional materials, and that employees receive a policy manual and training; and be it further resolved

**Resolved #4** that the facility's health and safety committee or representative conduct periodic verification of policy implementation and practice, and investigate reported incidents of allergic reactions.

#### **Organic Regulation in Ontario**

**Resolved #1** that the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario (PCWO) adopt as policy that organic produce in Ontario be regulated; and be it further

**Resolved #2** that PCWO urge the Government of Ontario to consult with Ontario's organic sector to produce and implement regulations that are in line with the Canada Organic Standard.

## **The Impact of Precarious Employment / Non-Standard Work on Women**

- Resolved #2** that the PCWO urge the Government of Ontario to:
- a) undertake a comprehensive structural approach to the examination of non-standard work/precarious employment as it pertains to new labour laws; and
  - b) collect data and do a gender-based analysis of non-standard work.

## **UPDATE: Alcohol Promotion and Protection of Children from Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and Child Developmental Delays**

- Resolved #1** that the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario (PCWO) adopt as policy the need to protect children from Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and developmental delays, and be it further

- Resolved #2** that the PCWO urge the Government of Ontario, specifically the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to ensure that:
- 1) there is an ongoing promotional, multi-media campaign in all liquor outlets to educate the public about the dangers of drinking alcohol while pregnant or nursing to protect children from FASD and developmental delays
  - 2) the Liquor Control Board advertisements in all media cease featuring alcohol as a life style choice.

## **Update 2015.01PU CESSATION OF THE USE OF SEGREGATION IN ONTARIO CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

- Resolved #1** that the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario adopt as policy that segregation of inmates not be used as a disciplinary tool in Ontario correctional institutions and that there be adequate secure facilities for persons with mental health challenges; and

- Resolved #2** that the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario urge the Government of Ontario to cease using segregation as a disciplinary method in correctional institutions and that they act immediately to ensure a secure facility for female inmates with mental health issues.



## **SUMMARY OF ONGOING ISSUES**

### **ECONOMICS**

#### **Economic Rationale for Investments**

##### **Economic Equity**

- Since its founding in 1923, PCWO has advocated for gender equality and the demand for equal pay was one of the earliest resolutions for PCWO advocacy. Today, gender economic equity is a United Nations and Sustainable Development Goal priority and must be addressed by each province in Canada for this nation to maintain its commitment to these goals. In addition, these goals are imperative for women to reach their full human rights in Canada.

##### **Cost of Poverty**

- PCWO believes that this Government must invest in the people of Ontario. The cost of poverty is unsustainable when considering health, social, educational and institutional services. Every dollar invested in Ontarians to reduce poverty through adequate social assistance, liveable wages, health services for all, affordable housing and support services, brings a high rate of return, not only for families, but for communities and businesses alike.

##### **Basic Income Pilot**

- PCWO supports a basic income program as a requirement to reduce and eliminate poverty. Therefore we encourage the government to re-invest in this pilot project and report regular updates on any progress.

##### **Proposed Changes to Minimum Wage**

- PCWO supports the minimum wage set to rise to \$15 in January of 2019 as a necessary part of closing the gender wage gap. With more women working at minimum wage jobs this is a key issue for women living in poverty. We urge the government to continue with the planned increase in minimum wage.

##### **Gender Wage Gap - Universal Child Care for All Ontarians**

- One of the crucial barriers to greater participation of women in the economy is child care.
- PCWO agrees that it is time for the Ontario Government to meet the needs of families and provide universal child care at an affordable rate geared to income as they have done in Quebec. We urge the government to fund the immediate development of a universal child care program.
- We urge the Ontario Government to commit to developing an early child care system within a defined timeframe. The system should provide care that is: high quality, affordable, accessible, publicly funded and geared to income, with sufficient spaces to meet the needs of Ontario families.

## **Gender – Based Analysis in all Ministries**

- PCWO agrees with the Gender Wage Gap Steering Committee recommendation that gender –based analysis (GBA) is a key process in establishing women’s equality in the economic, social and civic life. We urge the Ontario Government to initiate early in its mandate an adequately funded development of a gender - based analysis of all its policies, programs and services and provide funding for all ministries to implement the analysis.

## **EDUCATION**

- We urge the Ontario Government to make at least one Food and Nutrition course mandatory for all students in order to receive an Ontario Secondary School Diploma., and
- Make food and nutrition education a focus in all grades.

## **Sex-Education**

In 1984 the Provincial Council of Women adopted the only resolution on the subject. It was clear then as it is today that children “at all levels” needed to be equipped with more knowledge, than parents were sometimes able or willing to provide.

## **Sexual Education: Human Sexuality (84.9)**

- a) that procedures be developed and implemented throughout the province to facilitate the teaching of "Human sexuality" at all levels, on an ongoing and regular basis, with particular emphasis on the relationship between fertility and personal responsibility, emphasizing the ideal of strengthening the health and sanctity of human life.*
- b) PCWO urges the Ontario Government to establish swiftly an up-dated sex-education curriculum that addresses today’s information and guidance needs to the greatest number of students and their parents, and also find acceptable options for the parents who do not want their children to be part of the mainstream approach.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Nuclear**

- PCWO recognizes that the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission has the ultimate responsibility for all nuclear life-cycle operations, but that the Province determines whether to continue its heavy reliance on nuclear power and the life extensions and refurbishment of aging plants .
- Therefore, given the grave concerns of many scientists, health advocates, municipalities and groups such as ourselves, we would ask the government to

take a very close look at this extremely important issue, in the interests of the public, nuclear workers, the environment, local urban and rural businesses, and the long term health and well-being of Ontarians.

### **Green Power, Energy Conservation, Energy Efficiencies**

- The Provincial Council of Women of Ontario has for many years supported government investments in alternative green sources of power, energy conservation and energy efficiencies, as opposed to nuclear and coal-fired plants, and we are extremely disappointed that the Government has cancelled Ontario's 2009 Green Energy and Green Economy Act and the 2016 Climate Change Act and Programs, which would have not only continued to lower greenhouse gas emissions, but also helped households who tapped into grants for home retrofits savings on energy bills; provide extra income for farmers using good soil retention programs; and encouraged the use of fuel-efficient cars.
- PCWO also observes that the farm community uptake on the microFit programs for renewable power i.e. wind and solar, allowed many farmers to supplement their income. Due to the enactment of Bill 4, the Cap and Trade Cancellation Act, close to 758 projects owned by farmers, First Nations groups, school boards, and municipalities, along with businesses who produce windmill blades, are at risk of lost revenues.

### **The Great Lakes**

- Once again the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario reaffirms our support of the 2015 Great Lakes Protection Act and the 2017 Ontario-Quebec Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Region Clean Water Initiative, whose aims and objectives will, if pursued, help protect our precious Great Lakes from ongoing threats.
- All of these significant Great Lakes challenges/threats are exacerbated by the recent US government's significant withdrawal of funding from its International Joint Commission US staff operations. PCWO urges the Province to step forward and take a leadership role in protecting our shared international resource.

## **HEALTH**

### **Home Care and the Adequate Supply of Long Term Care Places in Ontario**

- As the founding organization of the "Victorian Order of Nurses " (VON) in 1897, the Councils of Women have had the compassionate and pragmatic care of the sick, young and old, individuals, families and communities uppermost as their concerns.

### **Hallway Medicine- Home Care**

- PCWO holds that Ontarians, with a medical condition manageable on an out-patient basis, be able to remain in their homes with necessary care and assistance for them and their families;
- We urge the Government of Ontario to develop a standardized means-test, which is equitable across the province, to ensure that a co-payment or an accumulation of co-payments for community support services is not a barrier to receiving health care services in the home.

### **The Adequate Supply of Long Term Care Places in Ontario**

- The Provincial Council of Women of Ontario (PCWO) urges the current Ontario Government to ensure that the number of licensed long term care (LTC) places available in Ontario meet the national standard; and that the number of licensed LTC places in Ontario be increased to meet the national standard of 1 bed per 1000 of population over the age of 75;
- PCWO also urges the Government of Ontario to develop a system of time limited licenses for LTC beds which can be revoked in 2-3 decades when the population needs have changed; and that priority be given to applications for more licensed LTC beds to not-for-profit and municipal LTC homes.

### **Drug Overdose Crisis**

In view of the current fatal drug overdose crisis, we commend the Ontario Government on the speedy review of the services of the “Supervised Consumption Services and Overdose Prevention Sites”.

- We look forward to the Ontario Government’s new “Consumption and Treatment Services Module” being implemented that promises a “wrap-around” focus on people with facilities for harm reduction and treatment, providing connections to health and social services, primary care, mental health support, housing, employment, and more detox beds in high need communities.
- More mental health support is an essential service not only for those suffering through such crises, but also for the frontline professional and volunteer first responders.
- We note and are glad that the Government of Ontario will provide free prescription drug coverage for children and youths with no private benefits. We continue to urge this government to consider the ultimate cost savings for Ontario Citizens by providing a universal pharma-care program and dental program for children in Ontario.

### **HOUSING**

- Over the past 36 years, the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario has urged various Provincial Governments to, among other actions, make affordable housing a priority by renewing its strong commitment to the support and stimulus of the housing market; having a strong rent review process to protect tenants from illegal rent increases; and developing and implementing a comprehensive, long-term Ontario Housing strategy. These will not only be the best, most

progressive and humane actions to take, but over the short and long term they will alleviate social costs, create jobs, and stimulate the economy .

## **SENIOR AFFAIRS**

- PCWO expects that the current Ontario Government will do its utmost to re-establish the trust of Ontarians into the safety and security of Ontario senior residences and long-term care homes by supporting and enforcing existing rules and regulations, and by quickly implementing and strengthening new remedies that may result from “The Public Inquiry into the Safety and Security of Residents in the Long Term Care Homes System”
- PCWO awaits the final report and expects that strong government regulatory action will be taken to address the recommendations of the inquiry, including a review of the duties and obligations of long term care and retirement homes, and an overall review of the systemic failures and of the nature of the oversight mechanisms.
- PCWO hopes that the current Ontario Government will encourage RHRA to use its powers to the full extent in order to assure that each resident feels safe in her home and that all our Ontario retirement homes are meeting the highest standard of safety and security.
- PCWO does recognize the challenges the new government will be facing, but we cannot ignore the fact that there is an urgent need also to put more focus on the implementation of the provisions of the **Long-term Care Homes Act (2007) and Regulation** and thus ensure that highest standards are being met by our LTCH and retirement homes.

## **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **Basic Income Guarantee**

- In 2016 the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario (PCWO) adopted policy that strongly supports a basic income guarantee program (BIG) for Ontarians. Therefore, we are extremely disappointed that the Provincial 3-year pilot program was cancelled half way through, before its results could prove or disprove its potential for improving the lives of those who struggle to pay the rent, feed their families and find jobs in a shrinking and increasingly automated workplace.

### **Inadequacy of Social Assistance Rates and Costs to Recipients and Society**

- PCWO is extremely concerned that the Government has cut back the planned increase to social assistance rates from 3% to 1.5%. The original increase didn't bring the overall rate to 1992 levels, cover the costs of adequate shelter or allow for a healthy diet, and there were no extra dollars for things we all take for granted in a civilized and compassionate society e.g. nutritious food, personal need products, a phone and transportation.

### **Wages and Precarious Work**

- PCWO adopted policy in 2004 supporting an adequate minimum wage, and therefore we are very concerned with the cancellation of the planned increase to \$15 per hour. PCWO urges the government to reconsider its decision.

## **STATUS OF WOMEN**

- PCWO is concerned that the cancellation of the Roundtable on Violence Against Women could mean that the new Ontario Government is not interested in eliminating violence against women. We look forward to information on the concerted strategies that the current Ontario Government will employ to end gender based violence and violence against women.
- PCWO is also concerned that the funding of the Ontario Rape Crisis Centres and perhaps other agencies may be caught in the process of program review. Some of these critical organizations have not received funding increases for several years to support the growing need for crucial rape crisis services. PCWO hopes that the Ontario Government can see its way clear to provide funding as soon as possible to these important organisations on which so many women depend in crisis situations.

# RESOLUTIONS Full Text

## PCWO RESOLUTION 2018-01

### Fragrance and Scent Free Policy for Schools and Child Care Facilities

- Whereas #1** chemicals, including those found in many scented products used every day for cleaning and personal care can seriously affect people, especially those who suffer from environmental sensitivities, allergies, asthma and other respiratory disorders; and
- Whereas #2** many people, especially children, are reluctant or unable to speak up about their environmental sensitivity; and
- Whereas #3** people may not even be aware of the substances and chemicals being used around them or of the potential effects scented products, or combination of products, may have on them; therefore be it
- Resolved #1** that the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario adopt as policy that all educational and daycare environments be fragrance/scent-free; and be it further
- Resolved # 2** that the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario urge the Government of Ontario to enact legislation to provide an indoor environment in all child care, daycare, elementary and secondary school facilities that are as free from fragrances, perfumes and scents as possible by:
- c) not allowing the use of scented personal care products within these facilities at any time by faculty, staff, students and the public users of these facilities, and employees, and
  - d) requiring all materials used for cleaning and decontamination to be fragrance/scent-free; and be it further resolved
- Resolved #3** that students, parents and visitors be informed of this policy through signs posted in school buildings, oral communication and promotional materials, and that employees receive a policy manual and training, and be it further resolved
- Resolved #4** that the facility's health and safety committee or representative conduct periodic verification of policy implementation and practice, and investigate reported incidents of allergic reactions.

## **PCWO RESOLUTION 2018-02**

### **Organic Regulation in Ontario**

- Whereas #1** the term organic refers to an ecological method of agricultural production that respects the natural environment; and
- Whereas #2** organic certification is the consumer's guarantee that all food products that use the term organic, actually are; and
- Whereas #3** the Canada Organic Standard is enforced for only products that carry the Canada Organic Logo or are traded across provincial borders, so consumers may be misled by the use of the term organic in provinces where no additional regulation exists; and
- Whereas #4** Quebec, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have all introduced provincial regulation, British Columbia will in 2018, and Alberta is moving toward regulation; therefore be it
- Resolved #1** that the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario (PCWO) adopt as policy that organic produce in Ontario be regulated; and be it further
- Resolved #2** that PCWO urge the Government of Ontario to consult with Ontario's organic sector to produce and implement regulations that are in line with the Canada Organic Standard.



## PCWO RESOLUTION 2018-03

### The Impact of Precarious Employment / Non-Standard Work on Women

**#1 Whereas** many Canadians engage in non-standard/contingent work referred to as precarious work including part-time, contract or term, temporary or casual, temporary agency or any job that has a specific predetermined end date; and

**# 2 Whereas** Statistics Canada reported in November 2017 that Canadians in their prime working years were less likely to hold full-time, year-round jobs than at any time in the past two decades. This is a clear indication of the rise of precarious employment that carries implications for household income, retirement savings, consumer spending and tax returns; and

**# 3 Whereas** there is uncertainty of continued employment when engaging in non-standard work: risk of job loss, continuous job search, always facing new demands, lack of control over the labour process, little worker access to regulatory protection, a wage that may be insufficient to maintain the worker and dependents, and sometimes long periods of unemployment are the reality faced by those in precarious work; and

**#4 Whereas** the shift away from full-time permanent employment has affected women and men differently as evidenced by women's continued over-representation in part-time work, therefore be it

**Resolved #1** that the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario(PCWO) adopt as policy the that Canadians need an adequate income to support themselves and their families; and be it further resolved

**Resolved #2** that the PCWO urge the Government of Ontario to:

- c) undertake a comprehensive structural approach to the examination of non-standard work/precarious employment as it pertains to new labour laws; and
- d) collect data and do a gender-based analysis of non-standard work.

## **PCWO RESOLUTION Update 2018-01**

### **UPDATE: Alcohol Promotion and Protection of Children from Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and Child Developmental Delays**

- Whereas #1** PCWO 83.5 Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) policy asked the provincial government to emphasize an education program on FASD; and
- Whereas #2** mothers' milk can contain alcohol, which can impair a baby's motor development; and
- Whereas #3** there has been a significant increase in drinking by young women in recent years and many babies are born each year with FASD, because of women who drink alcohol while pregnant; and
- Whereas #4** the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) has greatly expanded alcohol marketing through an increased number of new outlets, internet listings, and promotional literature featuring incentives to drink, and drinking as a happy life style; and
- Whereas #5** LCBO and other government licensed outlets are required to prominently post warnings regarding the dangers of drinking while pregnant, but this is poorly enforced; and
- Whereas # 6** there should be on-going campaigns by the LCBO to educate the public; therefore be it
- Resolved #1** that the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario (PCWO) adopt as policy the need to protect children from Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and developmental delays, and be it further
- Resolved #2** that the PCWO urge the Government of Ontario, specifically the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to ensure that:
- 1) there is an ongoing promotional, multi-media campaign in all liquor outlets to educate the public about the dangers of drinking alcohol while pregnant or nursing to protect children from FASD and developmental delays,
  - 2) the Liquor Control Board advertisements in all media cease featuring alcohol as a life style choice
  - 3) alcohol not be offered as a promotional reward
  - 4) Ontario's licensed liquor outlets post prominent warnings on the dangers of drinking alcohol while pregnant or nursing and that all promotional materials contain these same

warnings and there be enhanced enforcement; and be it further

**Resolved #3** that the PCWO urge the Liquor Control Board of Ontario to fund and support multi-media material providing information and tips for expectant parents about alcohol use in pregnancy and to work with organizations such as “Best Start” by Health nexus to produce them; and be it further

**Resolved #4** that there be support from the Government of Ontario for organizations that promote health and social services for pregnant women who need help/support to stop/reduce drinking during pregnancy, such as “breaking the Cycle” at Mothercraft in Toronto.

## **UPDATE 2015.01PU CESSATION OF THE USE OF SEGREGATION IN ONTARIO CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

- Whereas #1** in 2012, the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario urged the Government of Ontario to improve conditions in Ontario Correctional Institutions without delay by:
- a) Following the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules (UNSMR) for the Treatment of Prisoners and implementing the recommendations of respected Canadian bodies, including the Attorney General of Ontario, the John Howard Society and the Canadian Mental Health Association;
  - b) Reducing the need for overcrowding, and using programming and treatment based on credible research that reinforces the mandate of the Ministry of Corrections and addresses the crime-reducing potential of the program;
  - c) Ensuring that the physical and mental health needs of all inmates are met expeditiously in both jails and detention centres;
  - d) Working towards building smaller local prisons with the aim of closing super jails in the near future; and
- Whereas #2** segregation of inmates over undue lengths of time is being used as a disciplinary tool in Ontario's correctional institutions and increased over-crowding of these facilities will only exacerbate the situation; and
- Whereas #3** the World Health Organization considers segregation, which isolates and dehumanizes a person, to be a form of torture and many jurisdictions are moving away from its use; and
- Whereas #4** persons with mental health challenges are particularly at risk, and although there is a 100 bed secure facility for men the Provincial Ministry of Correctional Services is only recently planning to study the need for such a facility for women; therefore be it
- Resolved #1** that the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario adopt as policy that segregation of inmates not be used as a disciplinary tool in Ontario correctional institutions and that there be adequate secure facilities for persons with mental health challenges; and
- Resolved #2** that the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario urge the Government of Ontario to cease using segregation as a disciplinary method in correctional institutions and that they act immediately to ensure a secure facility for female inmates with mental health issues.

## **ONGOING ISSUES**

### **ECONOMICS**

#### **Economic Rationale for Investments**

PCWO encourages the Government to fund and support sustainable solutions to ongoing issues and maintain funding as needed. Women comprise the highest number of poverty and low income earners. Women suffer to a greater degree when health care budgets are cut, when home care and child care are not affordable or accessible, when social assistance rates are inadequate and when housing is not affordable or accessible. These conditions put women in vulnerable situations where they can more easily become victims of domestic and sexual violence requiring shelter, protection and medical assistance.

#### **Economic Equity**

Since its founding in 1923, PCWO has advocated for gender equality and the demand for equal pay was one of the earliest resolutions for PCWO advocacy. Today, gender economic equity is a United Nations and Sustainable Development Goal priority and must be addressed by each province in Canada for this nation to maintain its commitment to these goals. In addition, these goals are imperative for women to reach their full human rights in Canada.

#### **Cost of Poverty**

PCWO believes that this Government must invest in the people of Ontario. The cost of poverty is unsustainable when considering health, social, educational and institutional services. Every dollar invested in Ontarians to reduce poverty through adequate social assistance, liveable wages, health services for all, affordable housing and support services, brings a high rate of return, not only for families, but for communities and businesses alike.

#### **Basic Income Pilot**

PCWO supports a basic income program as a requirement to reduce and eliminate poverty. Therefore we encourage the government to re-invest in this project and report regular updates on any progress.

#### **Proposed Changes to Minimum Wage**

PCWO supports increasing the minimum wage to \$15 in January of 2019 as a necessary part of closing the gender wage gap. With more women working at minimum wage jobs this is a key issue for women living in poverty. We urge the government to reconsider eliminating the planned increase in minimum wage.

## **Gender Wage Gap - Universal Child Care for All Ontarians**

In 2017, PCWO adopted the final report and the recommendations of the Gender Wage Gap Steering Committee (2016). The report explores ways on how to create more favourable conditions so that women can be part of the labour force and take part more fully in the economic life of Ontario. One of the crucial barriers to greater participation of women in the economy is child care.

PCWO agrees that it is time for the Ontario Government to meet the needs of families and provide universal child care at an affordable rate geared to income as they have done in Quebec. We urge the government to fund the immediate development of a universal child care program.

The government should immediately commit to developing an early child care system within a defined timeframe. The system should provide care that is: high quality, affordable, accessible, publicly funded and geared to income, with sufficient spaces to meet the needs of Ontario families.

## **Gender – Based Analysis in all Ministries**

PCWO agrees with the Gender Wage Gap Steering Committee recommendation that Gender –based analysis (GBA) is a key process in establishing women’s equality in the economic, social and civic life. We urge the Ontario Government to initiate early in its mandate an adequately funded development of a gender -based analysis of all its policies, programs and services and provide funding for all ministries to implement the analysis.

## **EDUCATION**

### **Mandatory Food and Nutrition Education**

Nearly one-third of children and youth in Canada are overweight or obese – conditions that can result in increased risk of chronic disease such as Type II diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

While in 2012, the Ontario Government set a goal to reduce childhood obesity by 20% over five years, there are gaps and deficits in Canadians’ and Ontarians’ knowledge and skills related to food and nutrition. Seven of the twenty new and revised Family Studies courses released by the Ontario Ministry of Education in 2013 are food and nutrition related, but none are mandatory.

- We urge the Ontario Government to make at least one Food and Nutrition course mandatory for all students in order to receive an Ontario Secondary School Diploma, and
- Make food and nutrition education a focus in all grades.

## **Sex-Education**

In this time of so many dangers and questionable influences for our young children, on the street, on the internet, and in media, it is important that our children and young people be given the tools to recognize when they are being exploited, assaulted, bullied and enticed into unwanted actions upon their person and body that they do not understand, expect, and often cannot even name.

In 1984 the Provincial Council of Women adopted the only resolution on the subject. It was clear then as it is today that children “at all levels” needed to be equipped with more knowledge than parents were sometimes able or willing to provide.

### **Sexual Education: Human Sexuality (84.9)**

*a) that procedures be developed and implemented throughout the province to facilitate the teaching of "Human sexuality" at all levels, on an ongoing and regular basis, with particular emphasis on the relationship between fertility and personal responsibility, emphasizing the ideal of strengthening the health and sanctity of human life.*

During the intervening decades and today, PCWO has been trusting and relying upon the expertise of educators and teachers at every level and from the many school systems, medical experts and of course parents to determine the exact content of a sex-education curriculum, including what to teach to whom and when. It is understood that our children have a right to a physically and mentally healthy life and that their sexuality is also part of that health. To make sound choices, is only possible if children are given a factual, truthful education, which also discusses the consequences of their own actions to themselves and others.

PCWO urges the Ontario Government to establish swiftly an up-dated sex- education curriculum that addresses today’s information and guidance needs to the greatest number of students and their parents, and also find acceptable options for the parents who do not want their children to be part of the mainstream approach.

## **Environment**

### **Nuclear**

The Provincial Council of Women of Ontario (PCWO) urgently draws the Government’s attention to Ontario’s over-reliance on nuclear power, which requires enormous financial investments in the extremely dangerous nuclear life-cycle of building, operating, refurbishing, decommissioning and then storing wastes safely for hundreds of thousands of years. It is of particular concern that Ontario’s Pickering, Darlington and Bruce nuclear station are located on the shores of the Great Lakes Ontario and Huron, which provide fresh water and support many other recreational and business uses. Should there be an “*extreme event*” at one of them, it would pose great risk to millions of people on both sides of the US/Ontario border. In the case of Pickering, Ontario’s

oldest nuclear station, which lies on an active geologic fault line, and whose operating reactors are well beyond their safe life-span, such an accident would cause extraordinary harm to the millions of people nearby, including in Metropolitan Toronto, as well as the many urban and rural businesses there, and in fact the economy of Ontario.

We note that due to broad public, and independent scientific input at recent Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) nuclear reactor life-extension hearings, as well as at the public input to the Provincial Nuclear Emergency Response Plan (PNERP), the updated 2018 PNERP now recognizes that, "...emergency preparedness and response must operate on the basis that mechanical failure, human error, extreme natural events or hostile action can lead to nuclear or radiological emergencies.", and that, "All plans should be so devised as to be able to deal effectively with a broad range of possible emergencies, including severe reactor facility accidents" .

PCWO recognizes that the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission has the ultimate responsibility for all nuclear life-cycle operations, but that the Province determines whether or not to continue its heavy reliance on nuclear power and the life extensions and refurbishment of aging plants . Therefore, given the grave concerns of many scientists, health advocates, municipalities and groups such as ourselves, we would ask the government to take a very close look at this extremely important issue, in the interests of the public, nuclear workers, the environment, local urban and rural businesses, and the long term health and well-being of Ontarians.

In doing so, PCWO is sure that a full life- cycle cost/benefit analysis will show that nuclear risks and costs far outweigh the benefits e.g. jobs, and in the case of Pickering, the very minimal power output, which is mostly sent to the USA. In contrast, alternative power sources are at their lowest cost ever, extra power is available from Quebec, and many new and ongoing jobs will be created, as the nuclear plants are decommissioned and the wastes safely stored, away from the Great Lakes for thousands of years, as noted in PCWO's 2018 resolution "Long Term Stewardship of Nuclear Waste" .

## **Green Power, Energy Conservation, Energy Efficiencies**

The Provincial Council of Women of Ontario has for many years supported government investments in alternative green sources of power, energy conservation and energy efficiencies, as opposed to nuclear and coal-fired plants, and we are extremely disappointed that the Government has cancelled Ontario's 2009 Green Energy and Green Economy Act and the 2016 Climate Change Act and Programs. These would have not only continued to lower greenhouse gas emissions, but also helped households who tapped into grants for home retrofits save on energy bills; provide extra income for farmers using good soil retention programs; and, encouraged the use of fuel-efficient cars. PCWO also observes that the farm community uptake on the microFit programs for renewable power i.e. wind and solar, allowed many farmers to supplement their income. Due to the enactment of Bill 4, the Cap and Trade Cancellation Act, close



to 758 projects owned by farmers, First Nations groups, school boards, and municipalities, along with businesses which produce windmill blades, are at risk of lost revenues, in municipalities where public opposition sways elected officials .

## **The Great Lakes**

Once again the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario reaffirms its support of the 2015 Great Lakes Protection Act and the 2017 Ontario–Quebec Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Region Clean Water Initiative, whose aims and objectives will, if pursued, help protect our precious Great Lakes, from ongoing threats. These include a multitude of problematic inflows such as municipal sewage discharges, farm runoff, industrial pollutants, nuclear plant tritium releases (many times greater than advised by three Provincial reviews over several years), and deadly stack gas emission fallout of cadmium and mercury from municipal incinerators.

Growing threats of great concern are toxic flame retardant particles in leachate from ever-growing amounts of recycled plastics; radionuclides from potential nuclear disasters at reactors surrounding the Great Lakes; the radioactive legacy of US nuclear plants now being closed around all the Great Lakes but Lake Superior; the potential spills of liquid high level nuclear waste containing Highly Enriched Uranium from ongoing transport by truck through farmlands, over river and the Lakes from Chalk River to South Carolina. All of these significant Great Lakes' challenges/threats are exacerbated by the recent US government's significant withdrawal of funding from its International Joint Commission US staff operations. PCWO urges the Province to step forward and take a leadership role in protecting our shared international resource.

## **HEALTH**

### **Home Care and the Adequate Supply of Long Term Care Places in Ontario**

As the founding organization of the "Victorian Order of Nurses " (VON) in 1897, the Councils of Women have had the compassionate and pragmatic care of the sick, young and old, individuals, families and communities uppermost as their concerns.

### **Hallway Medicine**

One of the very pressing issues in the area of health care today is costly and disruptive "hallway medicine". A critical bed shortage in acute care hospitals is due to mostly elderly Ontarians whose OHIP-covered follow up health care services could be

managed on an out-patient basis. These patients cannot vacate the expensive hospital beds and go home, because they are unable to organize and/ or afford the co-payments for the necessary community support service(s), such as companion sitters, meals-on-wheels, homemaking and transportation programs which would keep them out of hospitals.

Not-for-profit agencies, because of their compassionate corporate values, are loathe to turn such clients away and often absorb these co-payments into their budget, a practice which cannot be kept up for long. There is also no consistent means testing across the province nor amongst different support agencies to determine which clients are truly needy and require having the co-payment waived.

PCWO holds that Ontarians, with a medical condition manageable on an out-patient basis, be able to remain in their homes with necessary care and assistance for them and their families; we therefore urge the Government of Ontario to develop a standardized means-test, which is equitable across the province, to ensure that a co-payment or an accumulation of co-payments for community support services is not a barrier to receiving health care services in the home.

### **The Adequate Supply of Long Term Care Places in Ontario**

Home care is, however, only part of the solution for the care of the ageing population. With the first wave of baby boomers getting increasingly frail and subsequent cohorts following, “hallway medicine” will become entrenched in Ontario hospitals for many years, unless the Premier and the current Ontario Government keep their promise to increase long-term bed numbers considerably over the next few years.

The Provincial Council of Women of Ontario (PCWO) has, since 1976 had policy concerning Long Term Care Homes (LTC), including: 76.10 - Inspection of Nursing Homes; 83.6 - Homes For the Aged; 93.4 - Beds For Long Term Care (LTC); 03.03 - Staffing Levels for LTC Homes; 01.04U - Regulation of LTC Homes; 08.2U - Standards of Care in LTC Homes;

The need for LTC licensed places in Ontario far exceeds the supply, such that there is no incentive for privately owned LTC homes to invest in capital improvements to update facilities and tear down buildings that barely meet the minimum standard for quality of life.

The previous Government of Ontario was exacerbating this situation by limiting the numbers of licenses to the existing stock so that not-for-profit groups cannot obtain licenses for LTC beds to increase the availability and choice for those who need this level of care. The previous Government of Ontario rationalized that by 2034 there will be a decreased need for LTC beds due to changes in demographics and was reluctant to add more licenses in the system at this time despite the overwhelming need for more LTC beds.

- The Provincial Council of Women of Ontario (PCWO) urges the current Ontario Government that the number of licensed long term care (LTC) places available in

Ontario meet the national standard; and that the number of licensed LTC places in Ontario be increased to meet the national standard of 1 bed per 1000 of population over the age of 75;

- PCWO also urges the Government of Ontario to develop a system of time limited licenses for LTC beds which can be revoked in 2-3 decades when the population needs have changed; and that priority to applications for more licensed LTC beds be given to not-for-profit and municipal LTC homes.

(In the section “Senior Affairs”, we deal with the safety and security of retirement and long-term care homes.)

## **Drug Overdose Crisis**

In view of the current fatal drug overdose crisis, we like to commend the Ontario Government on the speedy review of the services of the “Supervised Consumption Services and Overdose Prevention Sites”. The key findings such as “inadequate addiction treatment, not enough mental health services and lack of supportive housing options, speak to an intersectionality being found in the chronic homeless population also. We look forward to the Ontario Government’s new “Consumption and Treatment Services Module” being implemented that promises a “wrap-around” focus on people with facilities for harm reduction and treatment, providing connections to health and social services, primary care, mental health support, housing, employment , and more detox beds in high need communities.

More mental health support is an essential service not only for those suffering through such crises, but also for the frontline professional and volunteer first responders.

We note and are glad that the Government of Ontario will provide free prescription drug coverage for children and youths with no private benefits. We continue to urge this government to consider the ultimate cost savings for Ontario Citizens by providing a universal pharmacare program and dental program for children in Ontario.

## **HOUSING**

PCWO once more alerts the Government of Ontario to the growing housing crisis for persons in need of affordable housing, particularly those on extremely limited incomes, whether employed or not. Housing is a basic necessity and right, and its cost is the largest one to be paid by those in the greatest need. Basic monthly social assistance shelter allowances, which range from \$390 for single persons to \$756 for a couple with 2 children, are well below market rates, as are those of persons receiving Ontario disability support of \$672 for single persons to \$969 for a couple and 2 children . Meanwhile, for over 30 years neither the Federal or Provincial Governments have invested the required funds in affordable housing, not nearly enough has been built, and many formerly available rental units have been converted to condominiums .

This of course has resulted in an accumulated and growing affordable housing deficit. The list of Ontarians in desperate need, as evidenced by a 2016 survey by the Ontario Non Profit Housing Association (ONPA) found that 171,360 households were on municipal waiting lists for subsidized housing, which was 3.5% of all Ontario households. Added to the crisis, reports have come in from municipalities such as Niagara that wait times for subsidized housing are lengthy, even up to 12 years, and increasingly there are no accommodations, even in the short term, for those who are very difficult to house.

Over the past 36 years, the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario has urged various Provincial Governments to make affordable housing a priority by renewing its strong commitment to the support and stimulus of the housing market; having a strong rent review process to protect tenants from illegal rent increases; and developing and implementing a comprehensive, long-term Ontario Housing strategy. These will not only be the best, most progressive and humane actions to take, but over the short and long term they will alleviate social costs, create jobs, and stimulate the economy.

## **SENIOR AFFAIRS**

In previous years, PCWO has made many recommendations to Ontario Governments with respect to meeting the increasing need for the care, safety and security of our rapidly growing senior population. Media reports from the various regions of Ontario inform us almost weekly, that in some private and civic retirement and long term care homes, our senior population is exposed to physical and mental abuse, unsafe physical environments, poor nutrition and in the worst cases - murder. PCWO expresses its condolences to all the victims, their families and to the residents of the London and Woodstock areas. PCWO is greatly concerned and expects that the current Ontario Government will do its utmost to support and enforce existing rules and regulations, and quickly implement and strengthen new remedies that may result from "The Public Inquiry into the Safety and Security of Residents in the Long Term Care Homes System"

PCWO awaits the final report and expects that strong government regulatory action will be taken to address the recommendations of the inquiry. Ontario residents' trust in our LTCH has been seriously shaken. This inquiry is a right first step to bring that trust back with a thorough review of the duties and obligations of long term care and retirement homes, including an overall review of the systemic failures and of the nature of the oversight that obviously was much too weak to protect the vulnerable residents of LTCH.

The Ontario Government created the **Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA)** [www.rhra.ca](http://www.rhra.ca) to administer the Retirement Homes Act. PCWO hopes that the current Ontario Government will encourage RHRA to use its powers to the full extent to

assure that each resident feels safe in her home and that all our Ontario retirement homes are meeting the highest standard of safety and security.

We note that the

- RHRA has launched a new training program a New Compliance assisted Module (CAMs) to support homes with voluntary compliance.
- In the months ahead RHRA will be launching another module - Focus on assessment and plans of care.
- By January 2019, licensed retirement homes must be retrofitted with fully automatic sprinkler systems under the Ontario fire code act.

PCWO encourages RHRA on- going efforts to keep our senior residents safe and secure.

PCWO does recognize the challenges the new government will be facing, but we cannot ignore the fact on there is an urgent need also to put more focus on the implementation of the provisions of the **Long-term Care Homes Act (2007) and Regulation** and thus ensure that the highest standards are being met by our LTCH and retirement homes.

## **Social Development**

### **Basic Income Guarantee**

In 2016 the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario (PCWO) adopted policy that strongly supports a basic income guarantee program (BIG) for Ontarians. Therefore, we are extremely disappointed that the Provincial 3-year pilot program was cancelled half way through, before its results could prove or disprove its potential for improving the lives of those who struggle to pay the rent, feed their families and find jobs in a shrinking and increasingly automated workplace.

Our research and the experiences of Ontario's current pilot program show, that if the program were continued it would replicate the results from Manitoba's 1974-1979 Dauphin program and others. For instance, participants will improve job training skills and work opportunities, community health costs will go down, benefits will accrue to local businesses and landlords, and, of great importance for the future, the quality of life and sense of dignity for individuals, families and children will be much better. In fact preliminary evidence from the cancelled program shows that the majority of participants were working, and the BIG program payments helped them stabilize their lives, pay the rent on suitable housing for their children, eat healthier food and afford the basics we all take for granted.

## **Inadequacy of Social Assistance Rates and Costs to Recipients and Society**

PCWO is extremely concerned that the Government has cut back the planned increase to social assistance rates from 3% to 1.5%. The original increase didn't bring the overall rate to 1992 levels, cover the costs of adequate shelter or allow for a healthy diet, and there were no extra dollars for things we all take for granted in a civilized and compassionate society e.g. nutritious food, personal need products, a phone and transportation. However, the original planned increase and future ones, along with other improvements to the social assistance system, were a result of several years of advocacy, studies, commissions and plans that recognized the dire situation of those living in deep poverty. Now these efforts are stalled at a level where social assistance received by participants in the Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Programs are 30% to 50% of the poverty line and will worsen. Meanwhile the costs of poverty are enormous, particularly in the areas such as health, justice, local economies and lost personal opportunities .

## **Wages and Precarious Work**

PCWO adopted policy in 2004 supporting an adequate minimum wage, and therefore we are very concerned with the cancellation of the planned increase to \$15 per hour, which would still have been less than really needed to achieve a "fair wage". Some companies have stepped forward to provide a fair wage and many social justice and labour groups are advocating for it. This would allow a family to meet their basic household cost of living needs, as well as to be included in the mainstream community. Meanwhile, precarious employment is steadily rising, with automation and artificial intelligence playing an increased role, and working full time no longer provides assurance of living above the poverty line. Today's economy is not the economy of our parents or grandparents. In the 1970s there were lots of good high-paying manufacturing jobs, job stability, and jobs that could support a household. Today we have a precarious job market – where many jobs are temporary, contract, short- or long-term – but not permanent; they don't come with pensions and few if any benefits. PCWO urges the government to reconsider its decision.

## **Status of Women:**

### **Violence Against Women:**

PCWO is gravely disappointed in the recent decision of the Ontario Conservative Government to cancel the expert panel to end violence against women – the Roundtable on Violence Against Women that was established in 2015 to provide strategic advice on government policies. PCWO can understand that the new government wants to choose its own advisors; however, this diverse group, made up of respected representatives from many organizations that have worked on the frontlines

of the field of women's rights and women's safety. They have supported women caught in domestic violence, fought the establishment of Sharia family law in Ontario and continued to be instrumental to the women of Ontario and the government in providing advice on key issues that impact women in Ontario. These include family court fees in custody, access or child support cases, and paid leave for domestic or sexual violence, as well as other elements of the now repealed Bill 148 (such as the limitations on employers to force female staff to wear certain types of clothing like high heels).

PCWO is concerned that the cancellation of the Roundtable on Violence Against Women could mean that the new Ontario Government is not interested in eliminating violence against women. This is especially alarming given that 50% of all femicides (in which women are the victims of murder) in Canada annually, occur in Ontario. In the first 8 months of this year there were 53 femicide cases (Globe & Mail, August 13, 2018). We look forward to information on the concerted strategies the current Ontario Government will employ to end gender based violence and violence against women.

PCWO is also concerned that the funding of the Ontario Rape Crisis Centres and perhaps other agencies may be caught in the process of program review. Some of these critical organizations have not received funding increases for several years to support the growing need for crucial rape crisis services. PCWO hopes that the Ontario Government can see its way clear to provide funding as soon as possible to these important organisations on which so many women depend in crisis situations.

### **Elimination of the Ministry of the Status of Women**

Women in Ontario represent over 50% of the population and play a critical role in the economic and social success of this province. They also experience violence, abuse, poverty, physical and economic insecurity in highly disproportionate numbers, and in experience, than men in Ontario.

While PCWO respects the right of governments to create and eliminate ministries, and while the current Minister Responsible for Women's Issues holds other very important heavy portfolios that mirror the PCWO purpose, which is women, their families, community and society, we are, nevertheless, very concerned that the stand alone Ontario Ministry for the Status of Women has been eliminated. PCWO believes that reducing the Ministry of the Status of Women to a non-portfolio responsibility sends a message to Ontario women and to Canada that advancing women's and gender based equality is no longer a priority for this province and that issues impacting women specifically will not get the attention or focus they require.

At the core of the PCWO has always been also the belief in and advocacy for gender equality. At this time in the development of women's and gender rights and women's empowerment in Canada, gender-based analysis and a gender lens needs to be brought to bear on all governments. After the half-baked attempts at gender mainstreaming elsewhere, we know that this is not a simple undertaking. It was our hope that the newly existing Ministry on the Status of Women would be coordinating

collaboration across the government and ensuring the application of a consistent gender-based analysis and gender lens to all government policy making.

We look forward to information from the Minister Responsible for Women's Issues on whether and how the Ontario Government and the Hon. Lisa MacLeod intend to deal with gender-based analysis and the myriad forms of inequalities and violence still existing for Ontario women.



**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF CANADA  
2018 RESOLUTIONS WITH PROVINCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**1. WOMEN AND PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT/ NON STANDARD WORK**

- Whereas #1** an increasing number of workers are in precarious employment, poorly paid, insecure, unprotected and unable to support a household; and
- Whereas #2** Statistics Canada reported in November 2017 that Canadians in their prime working years were less likely to hold full-time, year-round jobs: the percentage of men fell to 56.2 from 63.3 percent a decade earlier, and women fell to 43.7 from 46.4 percent, a clear indication of the rise of precarious employment that carries implications for household income, retirement savings, consumer spending and tax returns; and
- Whereas #3** these workers are not protected from unacceptable practices such as being denied benefits like pensions, extended medical coverage and sick leave, and these jobs lack clear progression towards full-time work and job security; and
- Whereas #4** women account for 70% of part-time workers and 60% of minimum wage earners in Canada indicating that a robust gender-based analysis of trends is needed; and
- Whereas #5** the health effects on workers and their families include high levels of stress related tensions and exhaustion, the constant search for new work, periods of unemployment, limited rights and access to traditional representation and gaps in healthcare because of a lack of health benefits; therefore be it
- Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that Canadians have an adequate income, fairness in the workplace and an end to precarious work; and be it further
- Resolved #2** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to take immediate action to develop policies to rectify the discrepancies between the standard employment model and “non-standard” employment with the objective to end precarious work and bring fairness to workplaces; and be it further
- Resolved #3** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to examine, through gender-based analysis, the over-representation of women in non-standard work and employment both in the public and private sectors; and be it further
- Resolved #4** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to encourage the provinces and territories to review practices in their jurisdictions related to precarious employment.

### UPDATE 3: SEWAGE TREATMENT / WASTEWATER FACILITIES

- Whereas #1** in 1995 the National Council of Women of Canada urged the Government of Canada to:
- a. effectively address the national environmental issue of sewage by allocating funds for the upgrading of wastewater management facilities, to end the discharge of untreated sewage into Canada's lakes, rivers and seas;
  - b. enforce existing legislation such as the Fisheries Act, the Canada Water Act and the Canadian Environmental Protection Act where these acts relate to sewage disposal;
  - c. promote provincial and territorial development and enforcement of municipal and industrial sewage abatement plans;
  - d. continue public education on source control and pollution prevention methods; and
- Whereas #2** the federal government passed regulations in 2012 under the Fisheries Act called Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations; and
- Whereas #3** untreated waste water is still one of the largest sources of pollution in Canadian rivers, lakes and oceans; and
- Whereas #4** approximately 25 per cent of Canadian communities, large and small, have inadequate treatment or management of the waste water that they generate every day; and
- Whereas #5** The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) estimates \$18 billion will be needed to comply with the federal standards; therefore be it
- Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that sewage treatment and wastewater facilities comply with federal regulations; and be it further
- Resolved #2** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada in consultation with provincial, territorial and aboriginal governments to ensure compliance with federal regulations for wastewater treatment and management by:
- a. shortening the timeline for compliance with federal regulations for wastewater treatment and management;
  - b. ensuring sufficient funding for upgrading sewage treatment plants;
  - c. specifying that a definite portion of money given to municipalities and First Nations Reserves for infrastructure be applied to waste water upgrades;
  - d. monitoring the results and reporting yearly;
  - e. increase the fines for non-compliance; and be it further

**Resolved #3** that NCWC urge the members of the International Council of Women to work with their respective Governments to ensure adequate treatment of waste water

## **UPDATE 5: ENDING ADMINISTRATIVE SEGREGATION/SOLITARY CONFINEMENT IN CANADIAN PRISONS**

**Whereas #1** in 2016 the National Council of Women of Canada urged the Government of Canada to cease using solitary confinement as a disciplinary method in Canadian penitentiaries and ensure sufficient, independent, secure facilities for persons with mental health issues; and

**Whereas #2** the United Nations (UN) Mandela Rules adopted in 1955 defines solitary confinement as a period lasting no more than 15 consecutive days, and 60 days in any 365 day period; and

**Whereas #3** the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association and the John Howard Society of Canada and their lawyers argue that the practice of administrative segregation/solitary confinement in federal prisons is unconstitutional, increases inmates' suffering, and discriminates against offenders who are Indigenous or have mental illness; and

**Whereas# 4** even though the Attorney General of Canada maintains that segregation is a reasonable and necessary tool which protects inmates and staff, it is possible to operate prisons without resorting to sending prisoners to windowless cells where human contact is minimal; and

**Whereas# 5** solitary confinement causes psychological harm in nearly everyone who endures it, is a factor in several prison suicides and requires long term treatment following release; therefore be it

**Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that ending administrative segregation/solitary confinement in federal prisons is the objective and meanwhile its use be governed by international standards and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; and be it further

**Resolved #2** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to:

- a. end without delay the practice identified as Administrative Segregation/ Solitary Confinement in Canadian prisons; and
- b. adopt without delay legislation related to administrative segregation/solitary confinement to meet international standards in the United Nations Mandela Rules;

- c. appoint immediately independent oversight officers to ensure that prisoners' constitutional rights are observed and protected at all times; and
- d. urge Provincial and Territorial governments to adopt policies and practices aimed at meeting international standards, and ensuring the constitutional rights of inmates are protected.

**PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF ONTARIO  
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