

## Proposed Resolutions – AGM 2020

### *Reminder: Amendments Guidelines*

The Amendment Form may be completed and returned (in a word document) to the resolution's designated email address as attachments. **Access the Amendment Form Here:** [Form EN/ Formulaire FR](#)

Amendments should be designed to make a better resolution. Please save your document in a word format and indicate in the title of the document the **number of the resolution** and the **name of your club**.

**Deadline for receipt of amendments is April 15.** No PDF documents can be considered.

Resolution Number	Name of the Proposer	Title	Email to send amendments
Resolution 1	CFUW Markham-Unionville	Canada Health Act and Common Application of Medically Necessary Services	resolution1@fcfdu.org
Resolution 2	CFUW Ottawa	Payday Loans	resolution2@fcfdu.org
Resolution 3	CFUW Stratford	Achieving the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action	resolution3@fcfdu.org
Resolution 4	CFUW Stratford	Climate Emergency – Declarations and Action Plans	resolution4@fcfdu.org
Resolution 5	UWC Vancouver	Protecting Children from Exposure and Access to Pornography and Sexual Violence on the Internet	resolution5@fcfdu.org
Resolution 6	UWC Vancouver	Enforcement of the <i>Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act</i>	resolution6@fcfdu.org

For any questions about the resolutions process please contact, Teresa Habs, Chair of the Resolutions Committee at [resolutions@fcfdu.org](mailto:resolutions@fcfdu.org) or the National Office at [cfuwadvocacy@rogers.com](mailto:cfuwadvocacy@rogers.com)

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## Resolution 1: Canada Health Act and Common Application of Medically Necessary Services

**Proposed by: The Canadian Federation of University Women Markham-Unionville**

**RESOLVED**, that in order to maintain the integrity of the Canada Health Act, which guarantees accessibility and universality, the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urges the Federal Government to work with the provinces and territories to ensure transfer payments associated with provincial/territorial health ministries are based on a standardized application of the term “medically necessary care”.

### **Background**

Under the *Canada Health Act* (CHA) our national health insurance program is designed to ensure that all residents of Canada have reasonable access to **medically necessary** hospital and physician services on a prepaid basis, and on uniform terms and conditions. In return for transfer payments from the federal government, provincial and territorial health insurance plans are required to provide insured persons with: hospital services provided to in-patients or out-patients, if the services are medically necessary for the purpose of maintaining health, preventing disease or diagnosing or treating an injury, illness, or disability; and medically required physician services rendered by medical practitioners

The [preamble](#) of the *Act* states that the objective of [Canadian Health Care policy](#) is "that continued access to quality health care without financial or other barriers will be critical to maintaining and improving the health and well-being of Canadians. The primary objective of the *Act* is "to protect, promote and restore the physical and mental well-being of residents of Canada and to facilitate reasonable access to health services without financial or other barriers." (Section 3).

To do so, the *Act* lists a set of criteria and conditions that the provinces/territories must follow in order to receive their federal transfer payments: Public administration, Comprehensiveness, Universality, Portability, and Accessibility.

### ***Public administration***

**The health insurance plans must be "administered and operated on a non-profit basis by a public authority, responsible to the provincial/territorial governments and subject to audits of their accounts and financial transactions." (Section 8).**

This condition is the most frequently misunderstood; it does not deal with delivery, but with insurance. However, it does reduce the scope for private insurers to cover insured services (although they are still able to cover non-insured services, and/or non-insured persons).

### ***Comprehensiveness***

**The health care insurance plans must cover "all insured health services provided by hospitals, medical practitioners or dentists" (Section 9).**

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The *Act* lists, in the Definitions (Section 2), what is meant by insured services - in general, this retains the restriction to hospital and physician services arising from the earlier legislation. The provinces/territories are allowed, but not required, to insure additional services.

### ***Universality***

**All insured persons must be covered for insured health services "provided for by the plan on uniform terms and conditions" (Section 10).**

This definition of insured persons excludes those who may be covered by other federal or provincial legislation, such as serving members of the Canadian Forces or Royal Canadian Mounted Police, inmates of federal penitentiaries, persons covered by provincial workers' compensation, and some Aboriginal people.

### ***Portability***

**Because plans are organized on a provincial/territorial basis, provisions are required for covering individuals who are in another province.**

The conditions attempt to separate temporary from more permanent absences by using three months as the maximum cut-off.

### ***Accessibility***

**The insurance plan must provide for "reasonable access" to insured services by insured persons, "on uniform terms and conditions, unprecluded, unimpeded, either directly or indirectly, by charges (user charges or extra-billing) or other means (age, health status or financial circumstances);" (Section 12.a).**

**The CHA defines insured persons** as residents of a province/territory. Each province and territory is responsible for determining its own minimum residence requirements with regard to an individual's eligibility for benefits under its health insurance plan. Most provinces and territories also require residents to be physically present 183 days annually, and provide evidence of their intent to return to the province.

Provinces and territories may also offer "additional benefits" under their respective health insurance plans, funded and delivered on their own terms and conditions. These benefits are often targeted to specific population groups (e.g. children, seniors, social assistance recipients), and may be partially or fully covered. While these services vary across different provinces and territories, examples include prescription drugs, dental care, optometric, chiropractic, and ambulance services.

Uninsured hospital services for which patients may be charged include preferred hospital accommodation unless prescribed by a physician; private duty nursing services; and the provision of telephones and televisions. Uninsured physician services for which patients may be charged include prescription renewals by telephone; the provision of medical certificates required for work, school, insurance purposes and fitness clubs; testimony in court; and cosmetic services.

## Issues

1. **Inconsistency in application of the CHA:** Canada **does not** have a single national health care plan, but rather a national health insurance program, which is achieved by a series of thirteen individually administered provincial and territorial health insurance plans. As a result there is inconsistency amongst the provincial/territorial health insurance plans with respect to:
  - What each provincial and territorial plan deems as “*medically necessary hospital and physician services*”, thus what is insured and not insured.
  - Additional Benefits provided by each province/territory.
  - Ongoing additions/deletions to list of insured services and physician schedule of benefits.
  - Uninsured services for which patients may be charged.

Table 1 provides select examples of inconsistency of insured services and what is deemed as “medically necessary care” between the provinces and territories.

**Table 1**

<p><b>Funding for Autism Services</b></p>	<p><b>In Alberta</b>, the level of funding for each child is not based on the child’s specific diagnosis but on the unique needs of each family and child. Services funded include Autism therapy, respite service, child care and school support.</p> <p><b>In New Brunswick</b> the province funds the Services for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders, which is for preschool children diagnosed with autism. It provides 20 hours a week of intensive intervention (called early intensive behavioural intervention) for preschool children. This amounts to up to \$33,000 per child every year for autism therapy. There is also the Family Support for Children with Disabilities for children 18 years old or younger which helps support families with a child with a lifelong disability.</p> <p><b>In Saskatchewan</b>, families can only access up to \$4,000 a year per child under the age of six.</p> <p><b>In Nunavut</b>, no specific programs exist for children with autism. Applications can be made for income assistance through the territory’s Family Service’s department.</p>
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<p><b>Funding for Papanicolaou (Pap) smears as a screening tool for cervical cancer</b></p>	<p><b>Yukon</b> has no organized screening program for cervical screening.</p> <p><b>The Northwest Territories and British Columbia</b> both start screening at age 21 and offer annual screening until 3 consecutive negative tests, and then every 2 – 3 years until age 69</p> <p><b>Ontario</b> offers screening starting at age 21, every 3 years, until age 70.</p>
<p><b>Funding for Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) testing, a screening test for prostate cancer</b></p>	<p>The cost of the PSA test is currently covered in all provinces and territories except <b>British Columbia and Ontario</b>.</p>
<p><b>Funding for Vision/Eye Care examinations</b></p>	<p><b>Ontario</b> partially covers eye exams for those under 20 and over 64.</p> <p><b>Manitoba</b> covers eye exam every two years for those under 19 and over 65.</p> <p><b>Alberta</b> covers eye care exams for those under 18 and over 65.</p> <p><b>Nova Scotia</b> covers eye exams for those under 9 and over 65.</p> <p><b>Nunavut</b> covers eye exams, treatment, and operations provided by an ophthalmologist for all ages.</p>

**2. Limited Scope of CHA:**

Under the CHA currently the provincial/territorial health care insurance plans must cover "all insured health services provided by hospitals, medical practitioners or dentists." The primary objective of the *Act* is "to protect, promote and restore the physical and mental well-being of residents of Canada and to facilitate reasonable access to health services without financial or other barriers." (Section 3). The CHA further describes that to truly achieve the objective of the CHA, "continued access to quality health care without financial or other barriers will be critical to maintaining and improving the health and well-being of Canadians.

Health Services provided by hospitals, medical practitioners and dentists represent only a small scope of the services required to protect, promote and restore the

**physical and mental well-being** of residents of Canada. Achieving reasonable access to **health** services, without financial or other barriers, needs to extend beyond the provision of just necessary hospital and physician services. This might include services provided by Regulated Health Professionals (e.g. nurses, nurse practitioners, physiotherapists, social workers, psychologists, dietitians etc.). The majority of these services, unless provided within a hospital or physician practice, must be paid for out of pocket or by an individual's private health insurance plan.

**To highlight the lack of scope**, currently in Canada there is no midwifery legislation, provincial funding support and no practicing midwives in Prince Edward Island or the Yukon. All other provinces and territories regulate and fund midwifery services.

## Implementation

Some suggested actions for CFUW members and chapters to promote the Canada Health Act and common application of Term "Medically Necessary Care" resolution

- Educate yourself and learn more about the issue. Examine the issue from a through a social justice lens including gender and age equity, marginalized communities, and racialized communities.
- Lobby your local members of Parliament (MPs), members of provincial parliament (MPPs), and city council to express support for this resolution through a letter writing campaign.
- Meet with local elected representatives to share the CFUW position on the issues of the Canada Health Act and common application of term "Medically Necessary Care".
- Organize meetings with or support other interested groups at the local level to inform and gather support for the resolution and organize joint actions (i.e. events, letter writing campaigns etc.).
- Invite speakers to one or more of your meetings to raise awareness about this issues among your members. Possible speakers could include local activists, well-known politicians or community leaders who have expressed concerns regarding this issue.
- Sponsor an event to raise public awareness. For example you could organize a panel discussion with experts.
- Write letters to the editors of local newspapers or op-eds. You can use key messages from the resolution and background materials to write pieces for your local newspaper.

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## Resolution 2: Payday Loans

Proposed by: The Canadian Federation of University Women Ottawa

**RESOLVED**, that the Canadian Federation of University Women urges the Federal Government to work with the provinces and the territories to lower the cap on the interest rate payday loan firms can charge;

**RESOLVED**, that the Canadian Federation of University Women urges the Federal Government to encourage the Chartered Banks to make further efforts to facilitate short-term small loans.

### Background

The predatory practices of payday loan companies create great hardships for the most vulnerable sectors of society, particularly those living in poverty, the homeless, persons with mental or physical disabilities, including those with addictions, those encountering other forms of discrimination, and seniors. This is properly an issue of focus for the Canadian Federation of University Women because women have historically had more obstacles put in their way when they try to borrow money. Gender inequality intersects with other characteristics of vulnerable populations so as to exacerbate the punitive impact of this industry on women.

A payday loan is an unsecured short-term personal loan offered in small amounts. In general, to be a payday loan, there are a few essential characteristics:

*First*, the principal cannot exceed a specified amount, from \$500 to \$1,500, for a term that cannot initially exceed one month.

*Second*, almost all payday lenders in Canada charge a fee that is a fixed percentage of the principal for one loan period. The industry practice is to refer to this fee as a percentage or as "\$15 per \$100." This is not the same as an interest rate of 15 percent per annum. A \$15 charge on a loan of \$100 over a two-week period would represent a nominal annual percentage rate (APR) of 390 percent ( $26 \times 15$  percent). The initial cost of the loan can readily be ascertained on payday lenders' websites.

*Third*, the borrower is required to pay back the full amount plus interest at the end of the agreed short term.

In 2007, Parliament amended the *Criminal Code* to allow the provinces to regulate the payday loan industry. The rate in most provinces is \$15 per \$100 for two weeks. In Alberta and Manitoba, it is sometimes \$17 per \$100; in Nova Scotia \$19 per \$100; and

in PEI it can be \$25 per \$100. The example cited on the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada site for payday loan information is \$21 per \$100. At the \$15 per \$100 rate, a \$500 loan would require the borrower to pay back \$575 after two weeks.

Payday loan companies make it a point to be very welcoming to everyone initially and make it very easy to borrow money. Online options are becoming more common too. By definition, lower income individuals and those who have difficulty borrowing from a Chartered Bank are more readily drawn to payday loan companies. A payment of \$15 on \$100 payable in two weeks may not sound too intimidating to someone who does not do the math to figure out what the annual rate really is. How likely is it that the average borrower will consult the advice of the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada before entering a payday loan shop?

Payday lenders do not perform credit checks and they advertise this fact; nor do they report to credit information services. The prospective borrower must provide government-issued identification, show evidence of a regular salary or pension payment and a bank account on which to write cheques. The customer fills in an application form and signs it, gives the lender a cheque dated on the next date of whatever regular payment on which the loan is based for the principal plus the fee, and receives either cash or a direct deposit that s/he can access immediately.

Borrowers who are not able to repay their loans must either: (1) extend or "rollover" the loan; (2) pay off the loan but immediately borrow again from the payday lender through a "back-to-back" transaction; or (3) default, and thereby incur bounced cheque fees by the payday lender and insufficient fund fees by the borrower's bank, while still owing the full amount of the original post-dated cheque. If rollovers are not permitted, there is nothing to stop a client from going to another payday lender to get another loan. The whole thing snowballs out of control for many clients and there is a debt-cycle. See the article about Robbie McCall by Karla Hilton in *CBC News* for an example.

An old-fashioned term for the rates payday loan companies charge is usury. The difficulties many people face in trying to obtain a short-term loan at a Chartered Bank only boost the business of these loan companies. The casual observer may readily note the proliferation of various payday loan companies and their advertisements, especially in big Canadian cities. There is a pressing need for short-term loans on less exploitative terms and the need is not being met adequately by the Chartered Banks.

On October 2, 2019, Toronto City Councillors, concerned about the "predatory practices" of the payday loan industry and the distress of many residents, voted in favour of asking the province to cap annual interest rates at 30 percent or less, while requesting the Federal Government to cap all loan fees at \$15 for every \$100 loaned and to amend the *Criminal Code* to lower the maximum interest rate from 60 to 30 percent. They also voted not to issue any new licences for payday loan outlets.

## Implementation

Each club should consider whether the proliferation of payday loan companies is causing hardships to the most vulnerable people in their communities. They may wish to initiate discussions of this issue with other organizations focussed on poverty issues.

Clubs should also lobby their local MPs and MLAs to take the following steps to protect citizens:

1. A lower cap on the interest rates these companies can charge.
2. Better monitoring of their practices.
3. Encouraging more inclusive lending policies on the part of our Chartered Banks.

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**Note:**

The amendments to the *Criminal Code* were first made by: *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (criminal interest rate)*, S.C. 2007, c. 9 (in force May 3, 2007) [https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/AnnualStatutes/2007\\_9/page-1.html](https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/AnnualStatutes/2007_9/page-1.html), amending s. 347 of the *Criminal Code* as well as enacting a new s. 347.1. In September 2019, a further amendment to s. 347 came into force: *An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and other Acts and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*, S.C. 2019, c. 25, s. 127 [https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/AnnualStatutes/2019\\_25/page-10.html#docCont](https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/AnnualStatutes/2019_25/page-10.html#docCont), replaced s. 347(1)(b) of the *Criminal Code*.

The current text is cited as *Criminal Code*, R.S.C. 1985, c. C-46, ss. 347, 347.1

The current text may be found at these links:

S. 347: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/page-77.html#h-122004>

S. 347.1 : <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/page-78.html#docCont>

## Resolution 3: Achieving the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action

Proposed by: The Canadian Federation of University Women Stratford

**RESOLVED**, that the Canadian Federation of University Women urges the Government of Canada and the provincial, territorial and Indigenous governments, as well as the professional bodies, religious denominations and other entities named in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, to work diligently toward achieving the ninety-four actions recommended in the document.

### Background

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) began its work in June 2008 as part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) and continued until 2015 when its final report was released. Its mandate was to guide and inspire First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and other Canadians in a process of truth and healing leading toward reconciliation and renewed relationships based on mutual understanding and respect. Its purpose was not to determine guilt or innocence but to create a historical account of the residential schools, help people to heal, and encourage reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. It was formed as part of the court-approved Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Schedule N of that agreement outlined a number of responsibilities, which included:

- Hosting seven national events
- Issuing a final report
- Establishing a National Research Centre
- Collecting all relevant documents from other church and government entities
- Overseeing and approving a \$20 million commemoration fund
- Hosting community events
- Regional liaisons
- Statement gathering/truth sharing
- An active research agenda

The approach used by the TRC is a form of restorative justice aiming to heal relationships between offenders, victims, and the community in which the offence took place. It sought to uncover facts and distinguish truth from lies, and to allow for acknowledgement, appropriate public mourning, forgiveness and healing. Justice Murray Sinclair was appointed chief commissioner in 2010 replacing several other commissioners who chose not to continue.

The TRC spent five years travelling across Canada, hearing stories about Residential School experiences and their effects. It published five documents including the Final Calls to Action and established the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at the University of Manitoba which includes hearing recordings, documents and findings.

Prior to the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, there was The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples which began its work in 1991 and published its final report in 1996. The main conclusion of the report was the need for a complete restructuring of the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Some of the broader recommendations would have required the government to commit to a new set of ethical principles respecting the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the state. This new relationship would have acknowledged and respected Aboriginal cultures and values, the historical origins of Aboriginal nationhood and the inherent right to Aboriginal self-determination. Implementing many of the recommendations in the Royal Commission would have required constitutional change.

The CBC News website “Beyond 94” has been tracking progress on the ninety-four calls to action and summarized the status — as of October 18, 2019 — as:

- 26 not started
- 37 in progress - projects proposed
- 21 in progress - projects underway
- 10 complete

Many organizations in Canada are advocating for follow-up on the calls to action and are making commitments to that end:

- Faith organizations such as the Anglican and United Churches and the ecumenical organization KAIROS
- Labour unions such as CUPE and Unifor
- Professional organizations such as the Canadian Teachers’ Federation and the Canadian Association of Perinatal and Women’s Health Nurses

Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) advocacy for the full implementation of the TRC Calls to Action could shine a light on the potential benefits for the lives of Indigenous women and girls in addressing institutional, systemic, and multiple intersecting forms of racism and sexism. In particular, supporting the recommendations of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls would be meaningful follow-up to Call to Action #41. The experiences and voices of Indigenous women and girls must be centered in the implementation of Calls to Action #1 to 5 regarding child welfare. Culturally competent health care, as identified in Calls to Action #23 and #24 would help to protect Indigenous women from threats to their health and rights such as gender-based violence and coerced sterilization. The particular needs and experiences of Indigenous women and their overrepresentation in prisons should be addressed as part of Call to Action #30 with attention to women’s experiences for all the Calls to Action relating to the justice system. These are some examples of how applying a gender lens to the Calls to Action would support the rights of Indigenous women and girls.

This resolution will build on CFUW’s National Initiative on Indigenous Peoples passed by the National Board in June 2017. The National Initiative states that “For CFUW, reconciliation means learning about the historical discrimination and dispossession faced by Indigenous Peoples, but also learning about the diverse and rich culture of

First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. It means generating concrete actions to show support, appreciation and solidarity, and engaging in restoring friendly relationships and respect between non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples.”

(<http://www.fcfd.org/whatwedo/advocacy/cfuwnationaladvocypriorities/indigenousooples.aspx>)

### The 94 Calls to Action

The Calls to Action are set out in two main categories – Legacy and Reconciliation. The Legacy section has five sub-sections (with attached call numbers):

- Child welfare 1 – 5
- Education 6 – 12
- Language and Culture 13 – 17
- Health 18 – 24
- Justice 25 – 42

Likewise, the Reconciliation section has 16 sub-sections:

- Canadian government and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) 43, 44
- Royal Proclamation and Covenant of Reconciliation 45 – 47
- Settlement Agreement and UNDRIP 48 – 49
- Equity for Aboriginal People in the Legal System 50 – 52
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- Sports and Reconciliation 87 – 91
- Business and Reconciliation 92
- Newcomers to Canada 93 – 94

### **Implementation**

CFUW clubs should review the Calls to Action, and choose one or two that would be of interest to their club.

CFUW clubs should build their group's knowledge of the historical context of the chosen Calls to Action by examining:

- challenges to settler-Indigenous relations
- the historical agreements and policies that existed before the TRC



(One resource would be a University of Alberta online course through Coursera: <<https://www.coursera.org/learn/indigenous-canada>>)

CFUW clubs and members should examine the current state of affairs in Canada specific to racism, demographic data about poverty, health and domestic violence among Indigenous populations (in particular women and children), and the legal aid/penal system.

CFUW clubs should locate other groups in your community who are interested in Indigenous justice and find out what they are doing.

CFUW clubs should determine, through listening to Indigenous people and potential allies in your community, if support from CFUW would be helpful and in what way.

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#### Resolution 4: Climate Emergency – Declarations and Action Plans

Proposed by: The Canadian Federation of University Women Stratford

**RESOLVED**, that the Canadian Federation of University Women urges provinces, territories, municipalities, and other community groups and organizations to declare a climate emergency;

**RESOLVED**, that the Canadian Federation of University Women urges the Government of Canada, the provinces and territories, municipalities and other community organizations and the corporate sector to follow the declaration by drafting and implementing action plans, based on science, that work urgently to mitigate the factors creating this climate crisis and to prepare for the unavoidable consequences such as floods, fires, storms, climate refugees, food and water insecurity, and social conflict.

## **Background**

The first entity to declare a climate emergency, was the City of Darebin in Melbourne, Australia, on December 5, 2016. Such a declaration is an acknowledgement that global warming is a reality caused by human action, and that the measures being taken to date have not been sufficient to control or reduce such warming. As of December 2019, 1261 jurisdictions worldwide had also declared an emergency and of the 486 declarations in Canada, 400 are Québec municipalities that endorsed a Déclaration d'Urgence Climatique. In addition to municipalities, other Canadian organizations and institutions have declared climate emergencies, including some school boards, colleges and universities, the Assembly of First Nations, 22 medical and health organizations, and coalitions of civil society groups including women's organizations, labour unions, and faith-based organizations.

Extreme weather events are increasing in frequency and the world will face catastrophic impacts of climate change within 80 years if the average global temperature increase exceeds 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Currently, our planet is on track for 3 to 5 degrees of warming by 2100 (CBC, 2018). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the United Nations (U.N.) body that assesses the scientific basis of climate change and its impacts and future risks, released a report in October 2018 that stated what must be done to keep global warming to 1.5 degrees this century: human-caused emissions must be reduced by 45% of 2010 levels by 2030 and we must achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. All levels of government are now working with these figures but are not communicating the urgency of the 2030 and 2050 timelines.

Even with 1.5 degrees of warming there are irreversible climate changes, but the difference between 1.5 degrees and 2 degrees is dramatic in terms of the impacts on ecosystems and human civilization and also the risks of triggering natural processes that lead to further warming. At 2 degrees of global warming, heat waves, heavy rainfall, and sea levels would increase while crop yields and the availability of fresh water would decrease significantly. Low-lying Pacific island nations would disappear, along with 98% of the world's coral reefs. Millions of climate refugees can be anticipated (Levin, 2018). "The point of no return is no longer over the horizon," says U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. "It is in sight and hurtling toward us." (Jordans, 2019)

G20 countries are responsible for about 80% of global carbon emissions (Rabson, 2018) with Canada ranking in the top 15 of per capita emitters worldwide (Knoema, 2019). When taking into account emissions from land use and forestry, the World Resources Institute has ranked Canada as the highest per capita polluter in the world, ahead of the USA and Russia and at more than double the global average (Ge, Freidrich, & Damassa, 2014). For our small population, we are greatly exceeding our share of the global carbon budget. While per capita emissions have decreased slightly in recent years, a report released in 2019 showed that Canada's overall emissions had increased in 2017 (Global News, 2019).

Changing shopping and driving habits and finding other ways to take personal responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions can help to raise awareness about our wastefulness and our impact on the planet, but individual actions are insufficient for the speed and scale of transition that is necessary. The 2018 IPCC report says that to avoid the worst impacts of climate change we need "rapid, far-reaching transitions in energy, land, urban and infrastructure (including transportation and buildings), and industrial systems." Advocacy must focus on government and corporate responsibility to urgently reduce emissions and to plan and implement system changes.

With rapid changes and system changes, an emergency response to the climate crisis must ensure that governments and corporations facilitate a "just transition" that addresses the needs of workers, families, and communities (Hayhoe, 2019). People's jobs and well-being must be at the centre of the rapid and far-reaching transition to a carbon-neutral economy, including inclusive social dialogue and measures such as income support, training, re-employment services, and pension bridging. Climate action cannot be separated from the need for climate justice: a fair and equitable transition that promotes inclusive economies and human rights at home and abroad.

Urgent climate action is necessary for the future of our children and grandchildren and also for their health today. Children are not only the future but they are the present as well and, regrettably, are leading the climate change movement in the absence of power brokers doing so. Evidence, grounded in research, is mounting about the effects of climate change on the emotional well-being of children (Elks, 2019; Vaughan, 2019).

The climate crisis poses an immediate risk to everything CFUW promotes and protects: quality public education, the rights of women and girls, justice and peace. Climate change is already causing crop failures, floods, and catastrophic storms increasing financial hardship, food insecurity, and displacement which in turn increase the risk of domestic violence, of girls dropping out of school, and of child marriage (Ethans, 2019). Women and children are 14 times more likely to die in the aftermath of natural disasters and those who survive and are displaced face high risks of sexual assault and trafficking (Inter-Council Network and AQOCI, 2019). Marginalized women face even greater health and safety risks resulting from climate impacts. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights says "the world has never seen a threat to human rights of this scope" (Bachelet, 2019).

While most at risk, women have abundant potential to lead the equitable low-carbon transition that is needed globally to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. Project Drawdown, which researches and ranks the most viable global climate solutions, has pointed to the climate benefit of increasing access to education for women and girls (Hawken, 2017). Christina Figueres, former UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Executive Secretary, powerfully linked women’s risk and potential in the face of the climate crisis: “Women are disproportionately affected by climate change impacts such as droughts, floods, and other extreme weather events. They also have a critical role in combatting climate change but need to be better represented at all levels of decision making. Empowering women will be a significant factor in meeting the climate challenge.” (Inter-Council Network and AQOCI, 2019)

## **Implementation**

CFUW members should write letters to their municipality urging them to declare a Climate Emergency if they have not already done so.

CFUW clubs should circulate a petition to ask their municipality to declare a Climate Emergency if that has not been declared.

CFUW members or clubs should write letters to the municipalities that have declared a climate emergency to ensure that they follow that with a detailed plan to reduce greenhouse gases with ambitious targets for 2030 and 2050.

CFUW members should support the implementation of their local climate action plans.

CFUW members should write their MP to ask that the Federal government develop a clear plan with measurable outcomes to reduce greenhouse gases and achieve the goal of carbon neutrality by 2050.

CFUW members and/or clubs should write their MPP/MLA/MNA to urge that the province/territory declare a Climate Emergency and follow that with a clear plan to reduce greenhouse gases.

CFUW members should collaborate with community groups taking climate action and explore ways to support the youth climate movement locally, nationally, and internationally.

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## **Resolution 5: Protecting Children from Exposure and Access to Pornography and Sexual Violence on the Internet**

**Proposed by: University Women's Club of Vancouver**

**RESOLVED**, that the Canadian Federation of University Women urges the Government of Canada to further investigate avenues and develop effective policy to limit children's ability to view pornography using internet or mobile technologies.

**RESOLVED**, that the Canadian Federation of University Women urges the Government of Canada to investigate new technologies that might eliminate pop-up adverts as well as listings of related links to pornographic sites.

**RESOLVED**, that the Canadian Federation of University Women urges the Government of Canada to continue to expand its efforts to protect children from access to explicit sexual content on the internet.

**RESOLVED**, that the Canadian Federation of University Women urges the Government of Canada to encourage technology companies to increase the monitoring of online sexual violence on their platforms as well as the access to it by children.

**Background:**

It is indeed obvious that pornography and online sexual violence have skyrocketed in recent years and more needs to be done to protect children from adult content. Research shows us that such content is easily accessible online by children as young as 10 years of age viewing it. Another concern is that this material is viewed outside the home on smart phones and tablets where adult supervision is impossible.

The issue of the viewing of online sexually violent videos by children is a worldwide epidemic. We would like to minimize the harm to children and society as whole through education, technology, and public policy.

While pornography has been around for decades, it has drastically changed with the invention of the smart phone and the anonymity that came with it. According to Penny Nance, in her article Pornography is a Public Health Crisis, she states that the leading site for porn is PornHub, and it boasts 92 billion video views each year with over 75 million visits daily.

On the Culture Reframed website, Gail Dine's research indicates, "88% of all scenes in top rented and downloaded pornography contains violence against women". For this reason, we are using the term pornography and online sexually violent videos interchangeably.

The average age for a child to get a first phone in 2016 was 10 years old. Children get their first social media account at an average age of 11 years old. According to the American College of Pediatricians, in a 2010 survey, a third of children claim that their first exposure to online porn was at or under the age of 10 years old.

**Consequences of Children Viewing Online Violent Sexual Videos**



According to the website for American College of Pediatricians ([www.acped.org](http://www.acped.org)) when children view online sexually violent videos at a young age they get angry, fearful, and sad. It can create symptoms of anxiety and depression, and some can become obsessed with acting out what they see in the videos. Children under 12 years of age who viewed online sexually violent videos are more likely to sexually assault against their peers.

According to [lifesitenews.com](http://lifesitenews.com), the Children's Mercy Hospital saw roughly 1,000 children who were abused by other children within the week of being interviewed for their article. The majority of victims are girls between 4 and 8 years old. The perpetrators are boys between 11 and 15 years of age, many of whom admit to be acting out what they saw in the online sexually violent videos they watched. Minors now commit 25% of all sex crimes.

The American College of Pediatricians say the kids watching online sexually violent videos are at higher risk for maladaptive behaviours and psychopathology. They are also more likely to show more aggressiveness toward women, minimize the harm of rape, believe rape myths such as women were asking for it or enjoyed it, become more interested in extreme and deviant forms of pornography, find sexual infidelity acceptable, and as they grow up value marriage and intimacy less, and have decreased value in having children. In 2002, 56% of all divorces listed obsessive interest in pornography by one partner as a reason for the divorce.

## **Conclusions**

We are giving children access to online accounts without giving them the instruction, education, and understanding to handle what they are seeing. This is leaving them without the skills to build lasting relationships, creating a predatory approach to girls and putting girls in a vulnerable situation of being sexually assaulted by her peers.

We must protect both boys and girls from the porn industry and online sexually violent videos, which will stop the hijacking of children's sexuality.

## **Implementation**

The Canadian Federation of University Women urges members to be aware of [Cybertip.ca](http://Cybertip.ca) where any person can report suspected cases of online sexual exploitation of children.

The Canadian Federation of University Women members meet with their local elected provincial and federal representatives to determine what their party is doing to support the protection of children from exposure to pornography and urge them to take action.

The Canadian Federation of University Women members should write to their local Member of Parliament (MP) regarding the important issue of child access to pornography and sexual violence on the internet.

The Canadian Federation of University Women endorses the education for children regarding what they are seeing is not sex but rather the filmed sexual abuse of a woman. Explain that women as a whole do not enjoy abuse or rape. Educate parents and guardians along with the education system that pornography is not watching two people have sex anymore. Pornography is perpetuating violence of women through hard-wiring men's sexuality into requiring physical violence in order to find the scenes sexually stimulating. This is leaving women and girls vulnerable to violence within intimate encounters. One can choose to either be pro-pornography or pro-sex, but one cannot be both.

The Canadian Federation of University Women endorse the stance for the producers of the online content to be held to the same standards as TV and radio as overseen by the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CTRC). Implement as soon as possible current laws that are designed to protect children. The laws are not currently being applied to the content as they were built to do. The laws are not currently being applied by law enforcement, the justice system, or by government who oversees these regulations.

## **Glossary**

Children – between 4 to 15 years of age.

Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CTRC) – regulate and supervise broadcasting and telecommunications in the public interest.

Obscenity Laws of Canada – under Canadian Law, material is deemed obscene if a dominant characteristic of it is the undue exploitation of sex or sex combined with crime, horror, cruelty and violence. Section 163 of the Federal Laws of Canada.

Rape Myths – false beliefs that are hostile toward the victim of rape claiming she wanted it to happen, she enjoyed the rape, she caused the rape; shame the victim for not stopping the rape, while minimizing the impact of rape on the victim, and excusing the actions of the rapist.

Social Media Account – accounts to popular social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. It allows the one commenting to be noticed, and play games (Candy Crush for example)

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**Resolution 6: Enforcement of the *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act***

**Proposed by: University Women's Club of Vancouver**

**RESOLVED**, that the Canadian Federation of University Women urges the Federal, Provincial, Municipal governments and Territories to immediately endorse the *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act* and encourage law enforcement to implement new policies, procedures and guidelines including training so that the above-named law can be enforced and therefore work to end demand for paid sex, which is a cornerstone of the law.

**RESOLVED**, that the Canadian Federation of University Women urges the Federal, Provincial, Municipal governments and territories to work with and fund community stakeholders to provide exit strategies in the form of safe housing, health services, trauma counselling, and all the other services required for successful exiting for prostituted women and girls.

## **Background**

Whereas the Federal government passed the *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act* (POCEPA) on December 6, 2014, which supported the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) policy of decriminalizing the selling of sex while making it illegal to purchase sex, enforcement of the above-named law has been sporadic and desultory across Canada and law enforcement has generally been slow to recognize and respond to the new federal legislation.

CFUW passed a policy in 2010 supporting the Nordic Model which decriminalizes prostituted women while criminalizing pimps, brothel owners and sex buyers. There are three components of the Nordic Model:

- 1) Recognizing that prostitution is inherently **violent and exploitative**.
- 2) **Decreasing the demand** for paid sex discourages the exploiters (sex buyers, pimps and traffickers).
- 3) **Creating exit strategies** is necessary to provide viable options for women and girls seeking to escape the 'sex trade'.

## **Federal Government Action Since the Law was Enacted**

The POCEPA law was passed in 2014 by a Conservative government with a provision to review the Act in five years. In 2015, the Liberal government won a majority government and in Spring 2018 passed a resolution to repeal the POCEPA Act and also

to “decriminalize consensual sex work, and the purchase of paid sex work, for those over the age of 18”.<sup>1</sup> This effectively means that it would no longer be against the law to engage in the purchase of sex. This would, in turn, eliminate the major incentive of the POCEPA – to decrease demand for paid sex.

### “Consensual Sex Work”

The use of the word ‘consent’ in relationship to prostitution is difficult to justify. At its most benign, prostitution is a desperate act of survival. We would work for a society in which opportunities for girls and women are such that they are not forced to sell their bodies for food or housing and where men do not feel entitled to the use of female bodies for paid sex.

The average age of entry into prostitution is 12-14 years of age.<sup>2</sup> There is no question of consent. When these girls turn 18, after several years of being prostituted, their physical and mental health is severely compromised.

Moreover, figures show that 85% of prostituted women and girls were sexually abused at a young age. These girls and women are already traumatized when they become trapped into prostitution.

The trauma that prostitutes experience is cumulative and chronic. It’s not a one-time-event such as a motor vehicle accident or a rape. It’s a daily, repetitive occurrence. This is why some call it torture.

### Enforcement of the Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act in Canada

Enforcement of the law across Canada has been relatively slow. During the past 5 years since the law was passed, the total number of ‘incidents’ [‘incident’ refers to a criminal act coming to the attention of the police] across Canada is 2,074 (Statistics Canada 2014-2018). The number of sex buyers actually charged is 1,768.<sup>3</sup>

In terms of the incidents and charges laid, the Prairie provinces distinguished themselves by having the best rate of enforcement in Canada. These provinces - Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan - also had the highest number of incidents and charges *per capita*. In other words, even though the population of the three prairie provinces is not in the top three, they excelled in the number of sex buyer incidents and arrests. On the other hand, the provinces with the highest populations - Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec – have the lowest numbers re enforcement, in both numbers and per capita.<sup>4</sup>

### Decreasing Demand for Paid Sex

In Sweden, where the law made it an offence to purchase sex in 1999, the number of prostituted persons has halved and the decreased demand has made it an unwelcome place for traffickers. Conversely, in Germany, where prostitution has been legalized, the number of prostituted women has skyrocketed, along with the demand. With no legal impediments, Germany has become a haven for sex traffickers and organized crime. Brothels now run the size of city blocks, several stories high. The demand is so great that traffickers go to poor countries and harvest girls and women for use in the brothel factories. <sup>5</sup>

The following countries have all passed laws based on the Nordic Model: Sweden (1999), South Korea (2004), Iceland, (2008), Norway (2009), Canada (2014), Northern Ireland (2015), France (2016), Republic of Ireland (2017), and Israel (2018).

It is a mark of distinction for Canada that we have joined the progressive countries that understand the violence and systemic inequity endemic to prostitution and have passed legislation that follows the Nordic approach.

### **Exit Strategies**

Prostituted women who have managed to escape the 'lifestyle' are in need of massive rehabilitation for trauma, addiction, self-esteem issues, health issues and career counselling. The cost to the state of rehabilitating one prostituted woman or child is estimated at \$750,000 which is seen by some as a conservative estimate. Facilities that can provide safe and secure housing for prostitutes are few. When the *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act* was passed, the Federal Government allotted \$5 million towards exit strategies. Almost all of this amount went into policing and very little to support women and girls. This is not appropriate.

### **Comparison Before and After the Law**

A review of Statistics Canada figures shows that from 2009 and 2014, a period when prostituted persons were still considered criminals, 16,879 prostitution incidents were reported by police across Canada. <sup>6</sup> Law enforcement had no problem rousting prostituted women when they were the targets of the law.

But, even after five years of the new law coming into effect, from 2014 - 2018, a total of only 2,074 men were arrested and only 1,768 were charged. Without enforcement, a key purpose of the law isn't served – to reduce demand. We must do better if we are to see the lives of prostituted girls and women changed.

### **Conclusion**

The *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act* is a ground-breaking way of looking at prostitution in an age that recognizes the importance of women's equality. Although people like to say that prostitution has been around forever and will always be with us, it's an argument that ignores the enormous strides made by women over the past century. Societies can change. Patriarchy in the form of male privilege and entitlement can have a lens cast upon it to reveal the failures of that system.

Canada has a law that embodies the best of global legislation, following the United Nations (UN) Palermo Protocol and other UN-sponsored initiatives against violence against women. It is time for this government and all parties to recognize that there is no longer any justification for the old paradigm of the bodies of women and girls being available to males, no matter what.

Countries that have decriminalized and legalized prostitution are now realizing their mistake. Organized crime has strangleholds in those countries. Going back is difficult. Let us not allow lack of knowledge and awareness to prevail. Women and girls are at risk and need protection. We can make a difference. The time is now.

## Implementation

CFUW members may lobby their local Members of Parliament (MPs) to ensure that the decriminalization of prostitution is not an option and state publicly that they support the *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act*.

CFUW members can lobby their local MPs to instruct law enforcement agencies in their area to enforce the POCEPA law.

CFUW members can lobby their local MPs to create secure housing for exiting prostitutes that also provide counselling for trauma, addiction, career as well as providing health services.

CFUW members may work with other organizations with a similar view on enforcement of the POCEPA law and encourage the funding of specialized housing for exiting women and girls.

CFUW members may create an awareness campaign for their club, other organizations and society at large to inform them of the gravity of the situation and the dire straits in which thousands of young women in Canada find themselves.

## Glossary

Article 3 of the Palermo Protocol defines trafficking as:

“Trafficking in persons” shall mean the **recruitment**, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability **or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent** of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the **exploitation of the prostitution** of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;

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<sup>2</sup> Prostitution and Human Trafficking in Canada (n.d.) <http://thetraffickedhuman.org/get-informed/4-prostitution-and-human-trafficking-in-canada>

<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table 35-10-0177-01 Incident-based crime statistics, by detailed violations, Canada, provinces, territories and Census Metropolitan Areas](https://doi.org/10.25318/3510017701-eng) DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25318/3510017701-eng>



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<http://www.prostitutionresearch.com/Raymond%20Trafficking%20Prostitution%20and%20the%20Sex%20Industry%20The%20Nordic%20Legal%20Model.pdf>

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