

Date

Dear Honorable Mr. /Ms.

I am writing to urge you to vote for Bill C-471, An Act respecting the implementation of the recommendations of the Pay Equity Task Force. The Bill would require federally regulated employers to adopt pay equity plans, recognize pay equity as a human right and establish a new Pay Equity Commission and Pay Equity Tribunal. Although the Government of Canada officially adopted the task force recommendations in 2004, it has failed to implement them.

Bill C-471 passed second reading in March 2010 and was reviewed by the Standing Committee on the Status of Women in early November. I urge you to respect the human rights of all Canadians to equal pay and to vote in favor of Bill C-471 during its third and final reading.

Bill C-471 would address the wages gap between men and women in Canada. Women earn 72 cents to a man's dollar in Canada, and this gap increases to 52 cents for women with children. The earnings gap is even wider for marginalized women. To reduce the gap, the onus needs to be placed on employers – not employees- in keeping with the recommendations of the Pay Equity Task Force.

Importantly, Bill C-471 would abrogate the Public Sector Equitable Compensation Act – which removes pay equity as a human right for public sector employees. Under the Act, public sector employees do not have the right to file pay equity complaints with the Canadian Human Rights Commission. Unions who “assist or encourage” a member to file a complaint are fined \$50,000. Instead, under the Act, pay equity is to be bargained into collective agreements. If a collective agreement contains pay equity provisions, individual workers have to take their case to the Public Service Labour Relations Board. The Act makes pay equity - a human right - into just another bargaining chip in union and employer negotiations, Bill C-471 would ensure it remains a Human Right.

Supporting Bill C-471 is important to uphold Canada's international United Nation's commitment to gender equality under the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW.) Article 11 of CEDAW states that signatories are to “take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment...” Pay inequity based on gender is discrimination. Bill C-471 helps correct this inequity.

In brief, the implementation of the Pay Equity Task Force recommendations is long overdue. The Conservative Government has significantly eroded women's equality in four short years. In 2006, Canada was ranked 14 out of 150 countries (90 per cent of the world's population) by the World Economic Forum's Globe Gender Gap Index. It now ranks number 31.

Voting for Bill C-471 will help address this significant decline of women's equality in Canada – and ensure Canada abides by its commitments under CEDAW.

Yours sincerely,

Name

Address

City, Province

Postal Code