

# Put Equality Back on Track

In just one year the Conservatives have cut programs that are key to women's equality. During the last election campaign, Stephen Harper signed a promise to improve women's rights in Canada. Promise made; promise broken.

The Conservatives claim women are already equal. But, what are the facts? Women working full-time earn 71 cents for every dollar men earn. Only 15% of children have access to child care. Seventy percent of women with young children work. Aboriginal women in Canada experience higher rates of violence than other women. Women are 50.4% of the population yet hold only 20.8% of seats in the House of Commons. The Conservative Party ran the fewest number of women candidates in the 2005 election.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO

March 8 is International Women's Day.

- Participate in your community.
- Talk about the setbacks to women's equality and what we're fighting for.
- Make sure you send the federal government a message that says you want women's equality to be put back on track.
- Meet with or call your Member of Parliament to express your concerns.

For More Information about the Cuts or the Campaign to Put Equality Back on Track:

[www.womensequality.ca](http://www.womensequality.ca)

## What Harper Has Done:

### Status of Women Canada (SWC)

- Equality from SWC's mandate.
- Operational funding by 43%.
- 12 of 16 regional offices and 61 out of 131 jobs across the country.
- Funding for women's groups who do research and advocacy.



#### WHAT IT MEANS

Groups who document women's inequality and advocate for equality will not get funding. Their voices will not be heard by our decision-makers. For-profit operations are now able to access women's program funds. Status of Women Canada will only do limited work to push for women's equality inside government. There will be no federal presence for women's equality in most provinces or territories.

### Abolition of the Court Challenges Program

The Court Challenges Program, which funded cases to challenge federal laws and policies that violated constitutional equality rights.



#### WHAT IT MEANS

Access to the justice system to challenge unjust laws will be limited to those with deep pockets. Expansion of the program to challenge provincial laws won't happen.

### Pay Equity Legislation



The move to introduce pro-active federal pay equity legislation, contrary to the recommendations of the federal Pay Equity Task Force in 2004.

#### WHAT IT MEANS

Continuing wage discrimination: The Task Force found that the wage gap is 71% for all women; 64% for women of colour; and an appalling 46% for Aboriginal women.

A continuing pension gap: The gap is 58% for retired women under the Canada/Québec Pension Plans.

### Child Care

- Signed federal/provincial agreements to fund a quality child care system. The Conservatives introduced a taxable allowance of \$100 a month for families with children under six and tax incentives to create 25,000 spaces a year.
- Voted against a private member's bill, supported by all three opposition parties, to establish the framework for a non-profit child care system.



#### WHAT IT MEANS

Families will not have access to high-quality affordable child care.

Not one space has been created by the Harper government initiative.

Only a fraction of the cost of child care is covered by the taxable child care allowance.