

Mothers Day Statement

May 2006

On Mothers Day, we celebrate our mothers and all they have done for us. Yet in all our communities everywhere in Canada, mothers are struggling to make ends meet, to do well by their children and their families. Women must work hard to bring about a world where their children will not have to fear sexual violence, racism, poverty, discrimination and exclusion. Mothers do this in a society that has not adapted itself to the reality of motherhood in the 21st century or delivered its promise of equality for all women.

While more fathers have been getting involved, women still do the lion's share of the work of caring for children and the home. Most mothers do a double day's work and pay a disproportionate price for raising children. Motherhood often leads to impoverishment for women, to overwork, exhaustion and guilt. All mothers should freely choose to give life. All children should be wanted children. No mother should have to interrupt a pregnancy because she is too poor or because she lacks social or economic support.

Childbirth is one of the most expensive times in a woman's life, yet that is when she has the least capacity to earn a living. Mothers should be respected and supported. They need more government support and better income replacement, so they are not forced to depend on other family members for basic income security. Women with children must remain strong and autonomous and never be forced by economic necessity to remain with an abusive partner.

For Mothers Day 2006, we the undersigned request that:

- ✓ Federal funding for safe, quality, flexible, inclusive and universally accessible childcare services be maintained and expanded.
- ✓ Each mother of a child under six receive in full the promised amount of \$1,200 per child, in the form of a tax credit.
- ✓ No Province be allowed to claw-back Child Tax Benefit because a child's family is on social assistance.
- ✓ Maternity and parental benefits be improved, so that women across Canada receive at least as much as they would under Québec's more generous system.
- ✓ Federal pay equity legislation be adopted, as recommended by the Pay Equity Task Force Report in May 2004.
- ✓ Workplace policies be improved to meet the needs of casual, part-time and contract workers and to allow for flexibility to accommodate the needs of children.

We want real equality for mothers, now!