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August 15, 2025

To: The Right Honourable Mark Carney, P.C, MP.  
Prime Minister of Canada

**Re:** Cuts in Spending for Women and Gender Equality Canada

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing on behalf of CFUW (Canadian Federation of University Women), a national, self-funded organization founded in 1919. With 90 Clubs across Canada and more than 6,700 members, we work nationally and within our communities to achieve equality and social justice through continuous learning and empowerment, granting more than \$1 million a year in scholarships and awards.

We are writing to you today to express our deep concern about the federal government's proposed cuts to Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) over the next three years. CFUW has joined hundreds of organizations in expressing this concern.

According to WAGE's 2025–26 Departmental Plan, planned spending on core responsibilities and internal services is \$407,142,146 in 2025–26, \$284,695,249 in 2026–27, and \$76,266,802 in 2027–28. This represents an approximate 81% decrease over the three-year period. Additionally, the planned number of Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) is 444 in 2025–26, 314 in 2026–27, and 254 in 2027–28 representing an approximate 43% decrease over the same period.

These reductions are not a routine budget adjustment; they represent a devastating and disproportionate rollback that threatens to reverse decades of progress on gender equality in Canada. WAGE is the only federal department dedicated to advancing equality concerning sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression through the inclusion of women and 2SLGBTQI+ people in every aspect of Canada's social, economic, and political life. No other department can fill the gap created by these planned cuts. Canadians cannot afford to abandon this work.

According to WAGE's 2025–26 Departmental Plan, the planned funding decreases in 2026–27 and 2027–28 are primarily due to the scheduled end of time-limited initiatives from recent federal budgets. The overall uncertainty around future funding renewals makes it difficult for frontline organizations supporting survivors of gender-based violence, advancing women's economic security, and strengthening 2SLGBTQI+ communities to plan for long-term, systemic impact.

The projected reduction in spending 2027–2028 is of particular concern when gender-based violence is rising, misogyny is intensifying, and we are witnessing a rolling back of equitable rights internationally. Many organizations are already stretched to their limits. Canadians rely on the organizations that WAGE funds to provide programming that acts as a lifeline. The proposed cuts would reduce services for people fleeing abuse, weaken support for gender-diverse and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, force small local organizations to lay off staff or shut down, and eliminate essential programs that communities across Canada rely on.

We urge the federal government to reverse these cuts and recommit to building a Canada where all people, regardless of gender, have access to safety, opportunity, and justice. In the context of the generational challenges identified in the Prime Minister's mandate letter to Cabinet, Canada must draw on the full strength, talent, and participation of its population. We cannot leave anyone behind.

Ensuring that WAGE is well-funded and well-positioned to support the government's priorities, whether in economic growth, national security, housing, or social infrastructure is essential. Gender equality, support for 2SLGBTQI+ communities, and protection from violence are foundational to a resilient and prosperous Canada.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Sestock', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Linda Sestock**

National President, CFUW

Présidente nationale, FCFDU