

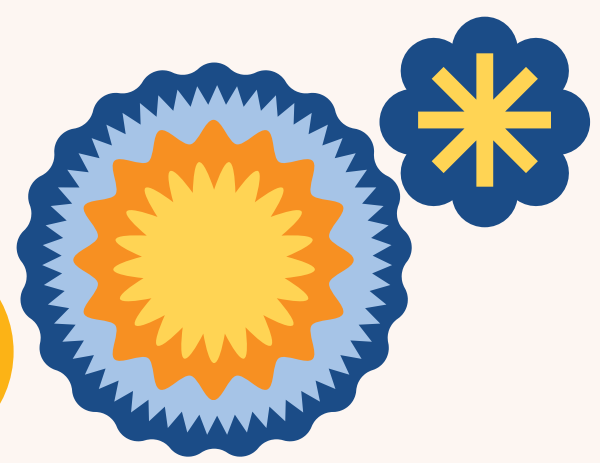
Fall Advocacy Package

2025



cfuw fcfd�

Table of Contents



Resolutions adopted by CFUW in 2025

	A Note About Resolutions	01
	Archived Resolutions	02
	Addressing Period Poverty and Menstrual Inequity in Canada	06
	Expanding Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Services	09
	Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Rights	12
	Strengthening the Awareness and Safekeeping of Individuals and their Animals Experiencing Domestic Violence	15
	Equitable Phase-Out of Fossil Fuels	18
	Affirming Housing as a Human Right and Social Good	21
	Advocacy Tips & Links	24
	Template Letters	25
	Bibliography	27

A Note About Resolutions

CFUW members are encouraged to act on resolutions according to the desire and capabilities of their Clubs. There is no expectation or requirement of a CFUW Club to act on any, or all, of the resolutions listed in this Fall Advocacy Package. Each Club can focus on the activities or causes that speak to them and that are relevant to their communities. If one of the resolutions that have passed fits with the Club's current focus, CFUW National has resources available in the Fall Advocacy Packages and in the Member's Drive to assist.

Archived Resolutions

In 2018 the Adopted Resolutions Sub-Committee was tasked with enhancing the value and ease of use of the CFUW Adopted Resolutions Book. The initial step was studying the current value and use of the adopted resolutions within the Adopted Resolutions Book. On close review of these adopted resolutions by the Sub-Committee and other interested CFUW committees, clubs and individuals it was apparent that there were many adopted resolutions that had had action taken or were out of date. These adopted resolutions, while valuable in their time, outlived their usefulness in the active Adopted Resolutions Book. While being archived, it has to be noted that these adopted resolutions, being motions, are still valid for use by any club, Committee or Council until any one of them are rescinded, that is officially removed by a member vote, something that might occur if the original is updated.

The Board approved action of archiving any adopted resolution states that they must be studied and considered via the same method as they were approved, that is, by club discussion and approval at a CFUW Policy Session, and that multiple adopted resolutions could be combined in one proposed resolution. (Board motion – April 6, 2021)

This resolution is in the next step in the process. If this resolution is approved by the CFUW Policy Session membership these adopted resolutions will be moved from the CFUW Adopted Resolutions Book and will reside in the CFUW Archived Policies Book, a historical record of adopted resolutions along with an explanation of why the adopted resolution is considered redundant.

In 2025, 13 resolutions were archived at the Policy Session. The following pages provide a description of these resolutions.

Archived Resolutions

Children – Aid to Children “at risk” 1979 Consumer Protection – Self Service at Retail Outlets – 1976

This adopted resolution, adopted during the International Year of the Child, has CFUW Clubs and Alumnae taking action to help children “at risk”. Things have moved beyond the request of this resolution.

This adopted resolutions requests that governments introduce regulatory measures at self-service retail outlets. Self-service retail outlets are currently evolving so this resolution is considered out of date.

Culture, Heritage and Information – Cable Television Advertising – 1972

This adopted resolution has CFUW petitioning the Canadian Government and Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission to forbid the use of advertising on cable television. Given the prevalence and popularity of streaming services this resolution is considered out of date, and while appreciated, will never happen.

Employment Equity – Discrimination in Employment – 1973

This adopted resolutions has CFUW asking the Government of Canada not to sign any contract containing clauses discriminatory to any employee on the basis of sex and marital status. The 1985 Human Rights Act addresses these concerns (Government of Canada, 2024a).

Employment Equity – Mandatory Retirement – 1988

This adopted resolution requests an amendment to the Human Rights Act to comply with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Canadian Human Rights Act was amended in 2012 to remove provisions that allow mandatory retirement for federally regulated employees. Prior to that, provinces had removed the mandatory retirement age (Government of Canada, 2024a; CBC, 2009)

Environment – Energy from Renewable Resources – 1975

This adopted resolution has CFUW requesting that governments give high priority to research into methods of obtaining energy from renewable resources. The 1992 adopted resolution Renewable Energy Conservation covers the ask of this 1975 adopted resolution. There is no requirement for two adopted resolutions advocating on the same topic.

Archived Resolutions

Finance and Pensions – Taxation and Poverty – 1969

This adopted resolution has CFUW requesting that the Canadian government exempt from taxation, incomes below the minimum poverty level recognized by the Economic Council of Canada (dissolved in 1993). In 2019 the Poverty Reduction Act set the Market Basket Measure (MBM) as Canada's Official Poverty Line. This is based on the cost of a basket of food, clothing, shelter, transportation and other items for a family of four for a 'modest, basic standard of living'. The MBM for 2023, having been set separately for multiple cities and provinces across the country, ranged from \$45,250 to \$57,909. For territories it ranged from \$63,220 to \$121,791. With this major change this adopted resolution has become now implausible and impossible.

Finance and Pensions – Tax Exemption of Housekeeper's Wages – 1967

This adopted resolution has CFUW requesting a change to the Income Tax Act to allow for the deduction of housekeeper's wages as a legitimate expense. The Income Tax Act has evolved to allow tax exemptions for childcare, cleaning of some designated work areas within the home, attendant care in the home when needed. This adopted resolution is no longer relevant. (Government of Canada, 2024b; Government of Canada, 2024c)

Government – Preservation of Democracy: Increasing Voter Turnout – 2014

This adopted resolution has CFUW Clubs promoting programs regarding the importance of voting. The Fair Elections in Canada (2014) adopted resolution also encourages more voter turnout. There is no requirement for two adopted resolutions advocating on the same topic.

Archived Resolutions

Health – Health: Pre & Post Natal – 1979

This adopted resolution has CFUW urging the Government of Canada to communicate to women and men the importance of pre and post-natal services. The resolution stemmed from the International Year of the Child and has met its aim. (Government of Canada, 2024e; Government of Canada, 2024f)

Health Care System – Organ Tissue Donation Awareness in Canada – 2002

This adopted resolution has CFUW urging the Government of Canada to fund the National Council on Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation. The Council, the National Standard and the registry asked for are now handled under different names and coordinated through a collaborative. This has been completed (Government of Canada, 2024d).

Peace, Security and Trade – Abolition of Nuclear Weapons - 1998

This adopted resolution has CFUW urging the Government of Canada to take a leading role internationally regarding the abolition of nuclear weapons. The requests of the 1998 adopted resolution are covered in the 2006 adopted resolution Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and Averting the Weaponization of Space. There is no requirement for two adopted resolutions advocating on the same topic.

Peace, Security and Trade – Responsibility to Protect – 2004

This adopted resolution has CFUW “supporting the efforts of the Government of Canada”. The Responsibility to Protect principle was adopted by the UN in 2005. The 2010 adopted resolution Mobilizing the Will to Intervene – W2I covers the requests of this 2004 adopted resolution. There is no requirement for two adopted resolutions advocating on the same topic. (United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, n.d.)

Addressing Period Poverty and Menstrual Inequity in Canada

Proposed by CFUW Milton & District, CFUW Perth & District

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge the federal, provincial, territorial, regional, municipal, and Indigenous governments to improve access to menstrual products by:

- Mandating the provision of free menstrual products in washrooms in all federally, provincially, and municipally regulated buildings, such as transportation facilities, schools, shelters, libraries, sports facilities, publicly-funded campgrounds and community centres.
- Updating provincial, territorial, and Indigenous legislation, including, but not limited to, occupational health and safety, building, and labour codes, to require all medium and large employers to provide free menstrual products as well as access to WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene) in all washrooms, gendered and gender neutral.

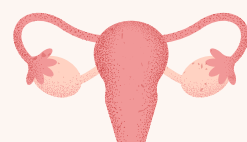
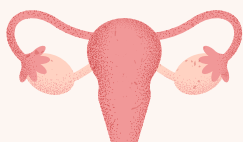
RESOLVED, That CFUW urge the federal government to reduce the cost of menstrual products by:

- Removing any remaining import duties/tariffs on imported menstrual products.
- Introducing measures to address the costs of period products for menstruators who are: living in remote and Indigenous communities; experiencing poverty; living with disabilities; experiencing homelessness; newly arrived immigrants; and/or vulnerable for other reasons.

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge the provincial, territorial, and Indigenous governments to encourage all publicly funded elementary, secondary and, where relevant, post-secondary educational institutions providing training for health care workers to:

- Provide comprehensive education on the menstrual process and options available for menstrual hygiene management that is sensitive to Indigenous, culturally diverse, and gender-diverse populations.
- Encourage open conversation, both within and outside of the classroom, to address the stigma and shame surrounding menstruation.

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge the federal government to act upon the 11 recommendations of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women 2023 report: Let's Talk About it, Period: Achieving Menstrual Equity in Canada



Addressing Period Poverty and Menstrual Inequity in Canada

Background

Period poverty affects menstruators across Canada, disproportionately impacting marginalized groups, including Indigenous communities, low-income individuals, immigrant communities, students, and homeless populations. Period poverty results when “menstruating individuals do not have access to affordable, quality sanitary products; safe, hygienic spaces in which to use them; or the ability to manage menstruation without shame or stigma” (World Bank Group, 2021). The inability to afford or access menstrual products leads to educational absenteeism, workplace barriers, and health risks, exacerbating gender inequality.

The years from 2020 to 2024 have seen a heightened focus on menstrual equity in Canada, with academic research, government initiatives, and community actions converging to address period poverty. While progress has been made, continued efforts are essential to ensure all Canadian menstruators live a life free from stigma, shame, and worry.

Period poverty remains prevalent, with 51% of respondents to a United Way survey indicating they had struggled to purchase menstrual products for themselves (United Way British Columbia, 2021). Poor menstrual hygiene, such as using one sanitary product for too long due to limited supply, or not washing regularly, can lead to reproductive and urinary tract infections, and result in infertility and birth complications (World Bank Group, 2021).

This Resolution urges all levels of government to take coordinated action to address menstrual inequity by providing free menstrual products, enhancing menstrual hygiene by improving WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) facilities, and ensuring the provision of comprehensive menstrual education.

Recognizing period poverty as a public health and gender equality issue aligns with Canada’s commitments to the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Goal 3, (Good Health and Well-Being), Goal 4, (Quality Education), Goal 5, (Gender Equality), and Goal 6, (Clean Water and Sanitation).



Addressing Period Poverty and Menstrual Inequity in Canada

Canada's Legislation, Obligation, and Positions

- Amendments to the Canada Labour Code (as of December 15, 2023) require federally regulated employers to provide free menstrual products (pads, tampons) to workers at no cost.
- Menstrual Equity Fund Pilot Project, launched in 2023 provides funding via Food Banks Canada and other community organizations to distribute free menstrual products and support education/awareness.
- Several provinces have programs to provide free menstrual products in schools. For example, British Columbia first in 2019; then Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Manitoba also have initiatives.
- The federal government acknowledges that period poverty exists in Canada, disproportionately affecting disadvantaged groups

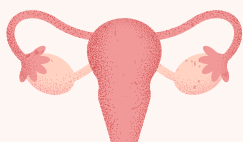
Take Action

Through its Canadian and global networks, CFUW is well-positioned to raise awareness of menstrual inequity. CFUW national, provincial councils, clubs, and individuals are encouraged to take the actions below.

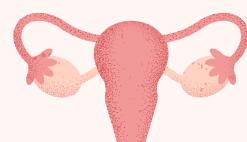
1. CFUW National could join coalitions advocating to remove import duties/tariffs on period products
2. CFUW National, Provincial Councils, clubs, and individuals could:
 - a. urge the federal, provincial, territorial, regional, municipal, and Indigenous governments to improve access to free menstrual products.
 - b. work with community members to educate ourselves and the public about stigmas surrounding menstruation and collaborate with Provincial Ministries of Education to enhance health education/menstruation curricula.
 - c. invite speakers to present on the need for menstrual equity in Canada.
 - d. use social media to generate messaging that normalizes menstruation and encourages conversation.
 - e. partner with organizations to raise awareness.
 - f. write to MPs and MLAs/MHAs/MNAs/MPPs advocating for menstrual equity policies.
 - g. further inform ourselves through research.
 - h. invest in, join, and support groups such as Plan International Canada, The Period Purse, Days for Girls, and True North Aid.
3. Contact local federal MPs to voice support for the Menstrual Equity Fund Pilot project and its continued existence
4. Connect with local elementary and high schools to donate menstrual products, host a drive
5. Connect with local community organizations to tackle the de stigmatization of menstruation.

Perhaps organize events with professional healthcare speakers

- a. Also dive in depth about menstruation illnesses like PCOS, PMDD, Endometriosis etc



08



Expanding Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Services

Proposed by Kenzie Zimmer, on behalf of the National Advocacy Committee

RESOLVED, CFUW commits to supporting universal access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, including abortion, contraception, fertility care, maternal care, prevention and treatment of sexually-transmitted infections, care of sexual and reproductive organs, and SRH education.

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to expand access to SRH services through measures including, but not limited to:

- ensuring surgical and medical abortions are fully covered under public healthcare;
- increasing funding for timely delivery of SRH services, particularly in rural and remote communities;
- providing targeted funding for Indigenous-centered and culturally-appropriate SRH services;
- offering a centralized referral system to locate SRH service providers;
- requiring comprehensive education and training on SRH, trauma-informed care, cultural competency, and informed consent in medical and nursing schools; and
- delivering sustained funding to non-profit organizations that improve access to SRH services for under-served communities.

Background

The World Health Organization (2024) defines sexual health as “a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity”. Sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services can include: abortion, contraception, family planning, fertility care, care of sexual and reproductive organ systems, including testing and treatment of diseases and conditions, gender-affirming care for transgender and non-binary people that acts on sexual and reproductive organs, prevention, testing, and treatment for sexually-transmitted infections, prenatal and postnatal / maternal care, comprehensive education about sexual and reproductive health and rights.

As abortion is often the most “controversial” and inaccessible type of SRH service and requires the most vigilance to protect as a right, it is the main focus of the Background, though the Resolution covers all SRH services.

In Canada, abortion is healthcare, governed by provincial and medial regulations. Both surgical and medical abortion are covered under provincial and territorial healthcare plans. However, access to abortion and other SRH services is not equal or equitable. Most abortion clinics are located in large cities, and access is often very limited in rural areas.



Expanding Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Services

Background

Consequently, many people must travel long distances and pay the associated travel costs to access abortion services, representing a major barrier to access. Other barriers include stigma, language barriers, experiences of racism in the healthcare system, lack of education, and discouragement or judgement from anti-choice healthcare providers or “crisis pregnancy centres” (Action Canada for Sexual Health & Rights, 2018). Racialized, young, and gender non-conforming people, migrants and refugees, members of rural and remote communities, and those with low incomes, as well as survivors of gender-based violence, face the greatest barriers to accessing care.

Barriers are compounded and unique for Indigenous people, who often experience heightened distrust in the healthcare system, trauma, and discrimination when accessing healthcare services due to colonialism.

Many people living in Canada also face challenges when accessing other SRH services, beyond abortion. All SRH services are vital to preventing unintended pregnancies, unsafe practices, and sexually-transmitted infections, and to supporting good maternal and mental health. They are thus key to achieving equity and healthy and safe communities.

Canada’s Legislation, Obligation, and Positions

- Health care delivery (including many SRH services) are largely in provincial/territorial jurisdiction, though the federal government influences via funding, national policy, and legislation like pharmacare.
- Abortion is legal in Canada; no criminal law restrictions after the Supreme Court struck down the Criminal Code provisions in 1988. Access remains a health care service.
- In February 2024, federal government introduced Bill C-64 (Pharmacare Act) to make a suite of contraceptive drugs/devices free under a national pharmacare, working with provinces/territories.
- Provincial programs vary: Ontario funds one IVF cycle (with age limit), supports IUI cycles; BC is introducing IVF funding; others have tax credits, grants etc. At federal level, expansion of eligible medical expenses for fertility under the Medical Expense Tax Credit.
- Maternal health is part of SRH planning and funding. Prenatal/postnatal services are medically insured via provincial health care systems. Federal funding via SRHF supports community-based projects to improve access
- STI prevention, screening, testing and treatment are officially part of SRH under the national SRH Fund.
- The SRHF funds projects to reduce misinformation, improve sexual health education for school-aged youth, caregiver/parent education, etc.



Expanding Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Services

Take Action

To implement this resolution, CFUW Clubs and members can:

- Write to their MPs in support of the federal government's Sexual and Reproductive Health Fund and encourage its permanent continuation.
- Explore Action Canada and LEAF's [Abortion Access Tracker](#) to learn more about access to abortion in their province.
- Meet with or write to their provincial representatives to urge expanded access to SRH services, highlighting specific access issues that exist in their province or community.
- Fundraise for organizations that advance sexual and reproductive rights in Canada and abroad.
- Attend protests/demonstrations in support of equitable access to abortion and other sexual and reproductive rights.
- Monitor and speak out against any attempts to restrict access to abortion, in Canada and abroad.



Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Rights

Proposed by **Kenzie Zimmer**, on behalf of the **National Advocacy Committee**

RESOLVED, That CFUW commit to supporting the human rights, equality, and inclusion of 2SLGBTQ+ (Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer +) people.

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge all levels of government to protect the rights of 2SLGBTQ+ youth and adults, ensuring their access to healthcare, education, employment, and housing, free from discrimination and violence.

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge all levels of government to fund programs and services that support 2SLGBTQ+ people—including, but not limited to, gender-affirming care, mental health care, community support services, and public education campaigns—with particular emphasis on meeting the needs of the most marginalized.

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge provincial and territorial governments to implement comprehensive sexual education curricula that speaks to the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities, in line with the 2019 Canadian Guidelines for Sexual Health Education.

Background

The terms and acronyms used to describe sexual and gender identities have evolved—and will continue to evolve—over time. The acronym in this proposed resolution reflects common practice, though the exact acronym used varies depending on the individual, organization, or institution. 2SLGBTQ+ stands for: Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer. The ‘+’ is inclusive of all other sexual and gender diverse identities, including non-binary. For more information about what these terms mean, please see the Government of Canada’s glossary.

Although discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity is prohibited by the Canadian Human Rights Act, 2SLGBTQ+ individuals continue to face discrimination, violence, and hate crimes. A 2020-21 survey of 2SLGBTQ+ individuals found that over the previous five years, 39% of respondents had experienced violence due to homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, or other forms of discrimination directed at sexual orientation or gender identity (Government of Canada, 2023). In 2023, Statistics Canada reported that hate crimes targeting sexual orientation had increased 69% from the previous year (Statistics Canada, 2024). In February 2024, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service warned that the “violent threat posed by the anti-gender movement is almost certain to continue over the coming year” (Tunney, 2024).

2SLGBTQ+ people also continue to experience discrimination and marginalization when accessing essential services like healthcare, education, employment, and housing. Resolved Clause #2 thus urges all governments to take action on these issues and ensure 2SLGBTQ+ people’s rights are protected.



Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Rights

Background

The unique, culturally-constructed barriers that 2SLGBTQ+ community members face, especially those who are most marginalized, necessitate tailored programs and services that support their health and wellbeing. Gender-affirming care, and inclusive healthcare services more broadly, are lifesaving services that need to be properly funded. For the health and wellbeing of 2SLGBTQ+ students, as well as the overall attainment of an inclusive, stigma-free society, it is important for provincial and territorial governments to develop sexual education curricula that speaks to the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities.

CFUW's mission is to achieve equality and social justice, and this mission cannot be achieved if the rights of 2SLGBTQ+ people are not upheld. While great progress has been made, Canada is not yet a place where everyone is treated with dignity, respect, and kindness regardless of gender identity and sexual orientation. We all have a role to play in changing this, and this Resolution seeks to commit CFUW to taking part. It calls upon our Clubs to be welcoming spaces, and calls upon our governments to take action to support the wellbeing of 2SLGBTQ+ communities, upholding their rights, and fostering a more inclusive society.

Canada's Legislation, Obligation, and Positions

- Bill C-4: Criminal Code amendment banning conversion therapy makes it a criminal offence to perform conversion therapy practices in Canada. This includes: causing someone to undergo it; promoting or advertising it; removing minors from Canada for conversion therapy; receiving benefit from it.
- Section 15 of the Charter guarantees equality under the law, prohibits discrimination on enumerated grounds like sex; courts have interpreted “sexual orientation” and “gender identity / gender expression” as protected grounds. Under the Canadian Charter, equality rights are entrenched and have been interpreted by the courts to protect 2SLGBTQI+ people from discrimination.
- Federal 2SLGBTQ+ Action Plan: A federal strategy (launched August 2022) to improve rights, inclusion, safety, and well-being of 2SLGBTQI+ people.
- Canada is party to international human rights treaties (e.g. ICCPR, ICESCR, etc.), and has commitments under CEDAW (for gender equality), plus obligations under UN human rights bodies to respect rights regardless of sexual orientation/gender identity.



Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Rights

Take Action

To implement this resolution, CFUW Clubs and members can:

- Use inclusive language and ensure everyone feels welcome to be themselves in Club spaces.
- Review Club policies and procedures to ensure they use inclusive language. Clubs seeking guidance should review CFUW's Policy on Gender Equity in Club Educational Grants, Bursaries, and Scholarships, available on page 76 in the Administrative Procedures Book, Volume 2.
- Stand up for 2SLGBTQ+ people's rights and call out homophobic or transphobic comments.
- Read, watch, and listen to 2SLGBTQ+ stories and perspectives, to further their own understanding and inclusion of 2SLGBTQ+ communities.
- Follow guides to being a 2SLGBTQ+ ally, such as [this one](#).
- Learn about the Two Spirit identity and how colonial norms and systems have repressed Indigenous understandings of gender and sexuality, using resources such as [this video](#).
- Subscribe to 2SLGBTQ+ advocacy organizations' newsletters and follow them on social media to stay up to date on their activities and participate in their campaigns.
- Donate to, volunteer with, and collaborate with local 2SLGBTQ+ non-profit community organizations.
- Attend or participate in local Pride parades and events.
- Host and attend presentations on topics such as gender identity, the history of the 2SLGBTQ+ rights movement, challenges faced by 2SLGBTQ+ communities, and how to practice allyship.
- Explore awarding scholarships for 2SLGBTQ+ students.
- Write to local politicians urging sufficient long-term funding for programs and services that support 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, referencing specific programs and services in your community as applicable.
- Write to provincial education authorities about the importance of inclusive sexual education curricula that speaks to the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities.

In provinces where transgender youth's rights have been or may one day be curtailed, CFUW Clubs and Provincial Councils can:

- Meet with or write to their respective provincial representatives to voice their opposition to any policies that restrict transgender youth's rights to express their gender as they choose and access the healthcare services that their physicians feel are best for them.



Strengthening the Awareness and Safekeeping of Individuals and Their Animals Experiencing Domestic Violence

Proposed by CFUW Prince George

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge the federal, provincial, territorial, Indigenous, regional, and municipal governments to recognize that cruelty to animals and domestic violence are often connected, known as the Violence Link, and to include the need for safety supports for animals of individuals experiencing violence in the home in the following ways:

1. Include language in appropriate policy and action plans that support victims-survivors of domestic violence that reflects awareness of the Violence Link and the importance of animals in their lives.
2. Review and initiate programs dedicated to providing immediate care for the animals of survivors of domestic violence because they are also at risk.
3. Provide options for continued safety of animals after individuals flee domestic violence including pet-inclusive affordable housing.
4. Provide sustainable and consistent funding for support programs.

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge the federal, provincial, territorial, Indigenous, regional, and municipal governments to raise awareness at all levels of society about the connection between animal cruelty and domestic violence, known as the Violence Link, by creating and widely disseminating informational resources and educational materials for the safekeeping of individuals and their animals.

Background

Research on domestic violence has revealed a strong connection between the abuse of human family members and the maltreatment of their animals. Animal abuse is also positively correlated with more types of partner abuse, and more frequent and severe abuse (DeGue & DeLillo, 2008; Barrett et al., 2017). The overlap between animal abuse and other forms of violence, including domestic violence, is known as the Violence Link (Humane Canada, n.d.; National Link Coalition, n.d.) and is well documented (Ascione et al., 2007; Overton et al., 2011; Barrett et al., 2017). The Violence Link is a significant barrier for individuals leaving domestic violence as companion animals are often viewed as family members, creating a vulnerability for being victimized along with human family members (Stevenson et al., 2017).

When an individual is forced to choose between their own safety and to leave their family pet in an abusive environment, many of them will choose to stay because they know that the animal's safety is at risk. Multiple studies demonstrate that at least 50% of victims delay leaving out of fear for the safety of their animals (Barrett et al., 2018).



Strengthening the Awareness and Safekeeping of Individuals and Their Animals Experiencing Domestic Violence

Background

Therefore, concern for the well-being of their pets can impact the help-seeking behaviour and subsequent actions of abused women. This is used by perpetrators by controlling their partners to be silent about their abuse, a form of coercive control (Coulter, 2023).

Post-hoc investigations of women in emergency shelters show that 89% ([Barrett et al., 2018](#)), 56% ([McIntosh, 2004](#)), and 53% ([Volant et al., 2008](#)) of survey participants who owned pets stated their abuser threatened to hurt and/or hurt and/or killed their pet. Reported types of animal abuse included kicking, hitting, throwing an object at a pet ([Barrett et al., 2018](#); [Volant et al., 2008](#)), throwing pets, swinging by tail, beheading/neck breaking, choking, hanging in air with lead, shooting, stabbing ([Volant et al., 2008](#)), and drowning ([Barrett et al., 2018](#)). Cruelty can also be in the form of emotional abuse such as leaving a pet outside longer than thought safe, intimidating or scaring a pet on purpose, and confining a pet in an inappropriately small space for an extended period of time. There can also be refusal to provide food, water, or medical care to a pet, and threats to get rid of a pet ([Barrett et al., 2018](#)).

The accommodation of pets has been identified as crucial for those escaping violence ([Ascione, 1998](#); [Volant et al., 2008](#)). The vast majority of shelters do not allow women to bring their pets with them. In 2022/2023, under one in three (28%) Canadian facilities for victims of abuse offered pet accommodations ([Statistics Canada, 2024](#)). Rural and northern communities have unique challenges where domestic violence and animal welfare agencies are not nearby.

Pet safekeeping programs have been developed to bridge the gap between animal services and human services in efforts to maximize the effectiveness of domestic violence prevention.

Creating informational resources and educational materials for stakeholders including victim services, animal welfare organizations, police, veterinarians, and educators and the public at large will be vital to give appropriate, proactive support for those animal owners in crisis.

Canada's Legislation, Obligation, and Positions

- There is no uniformly federal law that explicitly mandates all domestic violence protection orders or shelters include pets, though some jurisdictions have mechanisms or statutes that can include animals to some degree.
- Bill C-332, an act to amend the Criminal Code (coercive control of an intimate partner) mentions animals but it has not progressed into becoming law since it was introduced in 2024.



Strengthening the Awareness and Safekeeping of Individuals and Their Animals Experiencing Domestic Violence

Take Action

Advocate with stakeholders including animal welfare organizations and victim services for government to:

- Include language in action plans that acknowledges the correlation between domestic violence, the abuse of pets, and the barriers for victims regarding their animal's safety.
- Provide funding, support, and/or organizational capacity emergency crisis shelters and second stage housing for implementation of innovative programs for survivors and animals.
- Provide funding and support for animal shelter and foster pet safekeeping programs

CFUW clubs can do the following keeping in mind that each community in Canada has unique challenges (e.g., remoteness, funding, capacity):

- Create letter writing (to MLAs/MPs and to community media) and social media campaigns to:
 - provide/increase affordable, pet-inclusive housing
 - educate all stakeholders including police services and emergency shelters to ensure that they have the information they need to refer survivors of domestic violence to services that can foster their animals
 - explore funding for the care of animals
- Collaborate with other groups such as local SPCAs/humane societies/rescues and/or domestic violence shelters if they have a pet safekeeping/temporary fostering program for individuals fleeing violence to share the message in social media campaigns as well as in joint letter-writing campaigns
- Gather/produce resources in your community
 - Find safe ways to increase awareness (e.g., cards to give stating “If you need to get your animal out call ...”; car stickers) about the Violence Link)
 - Map safe havens for animals and owners fleeing violence ([Shelter Safe](#))
 - Create short posters with contact information for supports for specific area
 - Create video presentations of related topics and share with other clubs
 - Create action packages about the Violence Link and share links and materials with other clubs (examples of available resources: [ACT](#); [RESOURCES](#) | [violencelink.ca](#); [Violence Link Toolkits](#))
- Raise general awareness of the link between animal abuse and domestic violence
 - Support the creation of informational workshops/speakers to share what is meant by “The Violence Link” and how we can start to affect awareness
 - Support the creation of panel discussions with community stakeholders to increase awareness with the general public and targeted groups
 - Have speaker presentations focusing on the topic of animal abuse and its connection to domestic violence
 - Advertise and promote online, in the press, on TV and radio, at schools, churches, community centres, local events, etc.
- Ask your municipal government to make a declaration that recognizes the link between animal cruelty and domestic violence



Equitable Phase-Out of Fossil Fuels

Proposed by Alison Hobbs; Chair of Environment and Climate Change Subcommittee and Pauline Witzke

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge all levels of government and the corporate sector to phase out the extraction and combustion of fossil fuels in an equitable manner, to uphold Canada's obligations to the 2015 international Paris Agreement on climate change.

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge all levels of government to encourage a rapid transition away from the combustion of fossil fuels to carbon-free alternatives to enable the reduction and elimination of greenhouse gas emissions and environmental pollution.

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge all levels of government to educate Canadians about the environmental and health risks from the continuing extraction and combustion of fossil fuels and about viable alternatives.

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge all levels of government and private sectors to support a Just Transition process that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind.

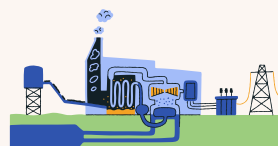
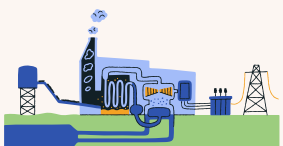
Background

The extraction and distribution of oil and gas are high-risk operations, with the possibility of uncontrollable explosions, accidental spills, or toxins. Canada has the 10th highest greenhouse gas emissions globally and the oil and gas sector is the biggest contributor to these emissions, followed by transportation (Emissions Database for Global Atmospheric Research, 2024).

2024 was the hottest year on record, reaching a global average temperature of 1.54 °C above the preindustrial average between January and September (World Meteorological Organization, 2024). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2021) warns that between 1.5 °C and 2 °C of warming will be catastrophic for ecological systems and human health.

The global stock takes accepted at the 28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (2023) calls on all parties, including Canada, to “transition away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade”. Thus, we can meet our climate goals while ensuring that all of society thrives.

In a Special Address to the World Economic Forum (2024), the Secretary General of the United Nations stated that “the phase-out of fossil fuels is essential and inevitable.” A Just Transition, as recognized in the 2015 Paris Agreement, requires clear timelines, tangible goals and government funding. A long-term collaborative effort among public and private sectors must “actively identify and implement opportunities to develop skills, secure decent work, sustainably develop their communities and enhance social protections” (Environment and Climate Change Canada, 2022). The UN's First Global Stocktake (2023) reinforces this, emphasizing that “just transitions can support more robust and equitable mitigation outcomes.”



Equitable Phase-Out of Fossil Fuels

Canada's Legislation, Obligation, and Positions

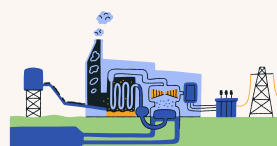
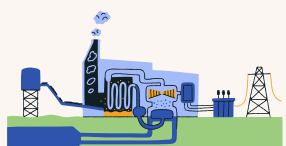
- Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act, Bill C-12 2021
- Canada has committed (domestically) to phase out or rationalize “inefficient fossil fuel subsidies” by 2025.
- The government has developed an Assessment Framework and Guidelines (delivered via Environment & Climate Change Canada + Finance Canada) to identify tax or non-tax measures that are fossil fuel subsidies, and to determine if they are “inefficient.” Measures are allowed to remain only if they meet certain criteria (e.g. supporting clean energy, essential energy service to remote communities, Indigenous participation, or abated processes, etc.).
- Canada has enacted (or has in process) legislation and policies intended to support workers, communities, and industries in transitioning away from fossil fuel dependence. E.g. the Sustainable Jobs Act requires planning, reporting, investment in employment opportunities in the low-carbon / clean economy sector.
- Paris Agreement / UNFCCC, G20/G7 commitments

Take Action

Recognizing the increasing global demand for energy, and the urgent need to decarbonize the current energy system, CFUW clubs can ask governments to:

- Deliver on the commitments of the Paris Agreement and the Canadian Sustainable Jobs Act.
- Invest in innovation and research and, through a comprehensive, sustained, public education program, share the results of monitoring pollution from fossil fuel infrastructure and its impacts on human and environmental health.
- Urge financial institutions to divest from fossil fuel production and infrastructure stocks, investing instead in renewable energy projects and efficient, sustainable infrastructure such as public transportation systems, so that citizens become less dependent on personal (especially single-occupancy) vehicles.
- Engage with foreign governments to discourage fossil-fuel generation worldwide.
- Follow COP29 commitments to ensure that the money flowing to threatened nations is spent on cleaning up pollution caused by fossil fuels.
- Support lawsuits against fossil fuel companies, holding them accountable for the polluting effects of fossil fuel extraction, despite the knowledge that they compromise human, plant and animal life.
- Urge public and private sectors to facilitate and expedite the transition to renewable energy systems, offering retraining and new employment opportunities, especially for people previously employed in the oil and gas sector.
- Collect taxes from polluters in order to support Just Transition plans.

CFUW members and clubs can educate themselves on the harmful effects of fossil fuels on the environment and personal health, sharing their discoveries with others.



Equitable Phase-Out of Fossil Fuels

Take Action

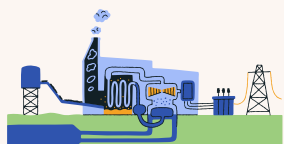
CFUW members can write letters and op-eds, countering the spread of disinformation about fossil fuels. Suggested topics include the following, each letter can focus on one or two:

- **Fossil Fuel Phase-Out & Legal Responsibility:** Canada must begin a fossil fuel phase-out, as required by the 2025 International Court of Justice ruling. It should also support lawsuits holding fossil fuel companies accountable for harm to people and the environment.
- **Ban Fossil Fuel Advertising & End Subsidies:** Stop all fossil fuel ads and eliminate tax breaks or subsidies for oil and gas companies. Public funds should not support climate-damaging industries.
- **Support the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty:** Canada should officially endorse this treaty, as many major cities already have. It's a meaningful step toward global cooperation on climate.
- **Act on the Sustainable Jobs Act:** Canada must fully implement the Sustainable Jobs Act (June 2024) and speed up the shift to renewables like wind, solar, geothermal, and green biofuels.
- **Invest in Public Transit & EV Infrastructure:** Expand and modernize public transit, and build more EV charging stations to support cleaner transportation options.
- **Expand Energy Storage & the Electricity Grid:** Invest in battery storage and a stronger electricity grid. Repurpose old coal mines and nuclear plants for clean energy infrastructure.
- **Protect Environmental Laws in New Developments:** Ensure the Building Canada Act (June 2025) does not override environmental laws. The Major Projects Office must uphold Canada's climate and Indigenous rights commitments.
- **Fund Clean Energy Innovation:** Support research into advanced battery technologies and rooftop solar on public buildings like schools, hospitals, and warehouses.
- **Launch a Climate Youth Corps & Public Education:** Create a national Climate Youth Corps and launch widespread public education on pollution, emissions, and health impacts of fossil fuels.
- **Deliver on COP29 Promises:** Follow through on Canada's COP29 pledges to fund cleanup and clean infrastructure in countries most harmed by fossil fuel pollution.

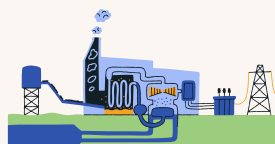
CFUW members can approach private companies, financial institutions and insurance providers as well as with government representatives, asking pertinent questions about their policies concerning fossil fuel consumption, fossil fuel products and their attitudes to cleaner, renewable alternatives.

CFUW clubs can support local action to reduce the use of fossil fuels and advocate for small-scale, community-based, electricity generation and storage initiatives.

Ahead of municipal, provincial and federal elections, CFUW clubs can recommend questions for candidates concerning their views on a future free of fossil-fuel emissions.



20



Affirming Housing as a Human Right and Social Good

Proposed by Heather Oxman, VP Advocacy

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge all levels of government to work together to protect and respect the human right to housing within their jurisdictions, by implementing policies and initiatives that increase the affordability and availability of housing, using all available resources, and giving priority to those in greatest need.

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge all levels of government to allocate public housing funds to new affordable units, repairing and maintaining existing affordable units and converting housing units so that all meet the criteria outlined in the Accessible Dwellings Standard and Building Codes and successor Codes.

Background

Definitions:

- **Adequate housing:** housing that is secure, accessible, habitable, provide basic services, in a location close to employment and basic social services, culturally adequate and affordable. (Canadian Human Rights Commission, n.d.)
- **Affordable housing** costs no more than 30% of a household's income before taxes (Statistics Canada, 2023).
- **Social Good:** “something that benefits the largest number of people in the largest possible way” (Kenton, 2024).
- **Social housing** are houses or apartments that are owned by local government or other organizations that do not make a profit and are designed to meet the needs of low-income and vulnerable populations.

Over time, and due to a number of factors, housing insecurity and lack of affordability plagues many Canadians. Factors contributing include: aging affordable, public housing stock; an increase in immigration; red tape at the development level; anti-development sentiments in suburbs; geographic concentration of the population in cities, and; incomes not keeping up with market prices. (Hogue, 2024) All these factors disproportionately affect marginalized groups suffering from disadvantage or exclusion, such as women with children, 2SLGBTQ+ groups, people with disabilities, post-secondary students, seniors, immigrants, Indigenous people and racialized groups.

This housing affordability crisis is driven by soaring market-based home prices and rental rates. According to Statistics Canada (2023), 1.5 million households (2.68M people) live in core housing need, defined as living in housing that is unaffordable, unsuitable, and/or inadequate. The rising market cost of housing outpaced stalled and stagnant income growth, pushing many Canadians into precarious living conditions. Additionally, COVID19 exacerbated the housing crisis by slowing the rate of building, caused by a shortage of materials and skilled labour, and an increased interest rate that slowed borrowing by developers to begin building.



Affirming Housing as a Human Right and Social Good

Background

Women are overrepresented among those in core housing need (Khanam, 2023). The intersection of gender-based violence, low income, and caregiving responsibilities heightens their vulnerability. Indigenous peoples experience systemic discrimination in housing markets, with many living without access to clean water or safe shelter. (PHAC, 2018) New immigrants encounter barriers such as discrimination and a lack of affordable options in urban centres. People with disabilities are challenged to find accessible housing that is affordable with their additional challenge of inadequate housing benefits (Canadian Standards Association, 2023). Rebekah Young, economist at Scotiabank, stated in 2023 that social housing makes up just 3.5% of Canada's housing stock, compared to the OECD average of 7% (Yarr, 2024).

Canada must increase the supply of adequate and affordable housing to meet growing demand. Federal investment has been announced in several budget cycles (the National Housing Strategy consists, in 2025, of \$82 billion in funding) and partnerships have been formed through bilateral agreements with provincial/territorial and municipal governments. These negotiated agreements should include, in all cases, access to affordable housing in all neighbourhoods and encourage municipalities to use innovative initiatives. Provinces and territories need to provide support, including making public land available, to municipalities to get on with reforms that speed building new affordable housing and repairing and maintaining existing units.

We have a long failed history of relying on private industry to meet the safe, secure, accessible and affordable housing needs of Canadians. We need Canada to build adequate, affordable housing now and into the future. Housing as a human right is not merely an ideal but a necessity for a just and equitable society. By addressing core housing needs and prioritizing adequate, affordable housing, Canada can create a housing system that serves all its citizens.

Canada's Legislation, Obligation, and Positions

- National Housing Strategy Act (2019)
- The Canadian Human Rights Commission explicitly treats the right to housing (adequate, safe, accessible, affordable) as human rights law; emphasizes progressive realization; obliges governments to take action, particularly for those in greatest need; emphasizes non-discrimination under human rights law.
- Canada ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) in 1976. That treaty includes the right to an adequate standard of living, which includes housing. Under the treaty, Canada has legal obligations to “respect, protect, fulfill” housing rights to the maximum of its available resources and progressively realize them.
- Provincial human rights codes typically prohibit discrimination in housing on grounds like race, disability, familial status, etc. Some (e.g. Ontario Human Rights Commission) interpret these in light of housing rights and adequate housing obligations under international law.
- Build Canada Homes was launched September 2025. Build Canada Homes is a new federal agency that will build affordable housing at scale. It will leverage public lands, offer flexible financial incentives, attract private capital, facilitate large portfolio projects, and support modern manufacturers to build the homes that Canadians need.



Affirming Housing as a Human Right and Social Good

Take Action

Nationally, CFUW could

- Ensure that the federal government maintains its focus and priority on housing as a human right and ensure it considers intersectional interests when developing budgets going forward.
- Ensure that Prohibition on the Acquisition of Residential Real Estate by Overseas Individuals Act. (RSC SOR/2022-250) is renewed or extended.
- Urge the Federal Government to reinstate the position of Federal Housing Minister
- Urge the use of public lands as locations for affordable housing projects, as long as doing so does not violate environmental laws or regulations

Locally: Club members could

- Join/create a Non Profit Housing board
- Research the local situation regarding housing insecurity

Locally, Clubs could

- Investigate opportunities to engage with local municipalities and groups to promote the availability of affordable housing options, and support and encourage development of such in their communities.

At municipal level, Clubs could ask their city council to consider adopting initiatives that increase the supply of adequate, affordable housing in their communities, such as, but not limited to:

- Increasing densification or increase housing units allotted to one single family plot
- Creating inclusionary zones for social housing
- A rental replacement policy (when a rental unit is demolished/converted, equivalent rental unit(s) must be provided)
- Purchasing and/or renting vacant units to be used as social housing
- reducing taxes on property improvements where they increase housing units;
- supporting affordable co-housing arrangements;
- rezoning, ensuring no negative environmental impact;
- reducing or waiving permit fees for development or property tax exemptions, and;
- applying vacancy taxes where not already in place and where it makes sense
- limit short term rentals

At provincial level, Provincial Councils could talk to legislators about

- Increasing transitional housing and shelter availability
- Ensuring that where housing developments are proposed on public lands, environmental laws and regulations are not violated



Advocacy Tips & Links

Read “Realizing Potential: Advocacy Action Using CFUW Adopted Resolutions” for a useful summary of CFUW Adopted Resolutions that reflect current issues and CFUW priorities. You can consult the full [Adopted Resolutions Book](#) [here](#).

Check out the Advocacy Resources folder within the CFUW Resource Hub in the Members Drive and on the website. Here, you can find previous CFUW research, template letters, and other resources organized by topic area. You can also find the Advocacy Handbook, a collection of documents outlining valuable advice and tips on conducting advocacy.

Review and follow the [CFUW Advocacy Guidelines](#) and [CFUW Advocacy: Who Does What?](#) documents before engaging in any advocacy action as a CFUW Club or member.

Attend the Fall Advocacy Toolbox Workshop (details in Club Action News!)

Sign up for the [CFUW Club Action Newsletter](#) if you haven't already. It's a great way to find out what other Clubs are up to, get inspiration for your own advocacy work, learn about events, and stay up-to-date with advocacy news through the “Advocacy Updates” section.

Download the template letters provided for this year's resolutions and send them to your local representatives, either in the mail or by email. In your letter, offer to meet your representative to discuss the topic further!

Reach out to CFUW's National Advocacy and Policy Specialist (advocacy@cfuw-fcfdu.ca) and the VP Advocacy (vpadvocacy@cfuw.ca) to discuss any advocacy matters or ask any questions.

Propose your own Resolution if there is a topic about which your Club is passionate and on which there is not currently an Adopted Resolution! Read the “Resolutions Information and Guidelines” document to learn more about how to propose a Resolution.

A Note on Template Letters

Given the distinct jurisdictions of federal, provincial, Indigenous, and municipal governments across Canada, it is difficult to create template letters that are general enough to be directed at political representatives at all levels of government. Laws, policies, and priorities also differ significantly between Canada's provinces and municipalities, sometimes making it challenging to create one over-arching “ask” that fits all contexts.

Whether or not the representative is a member of the governing political party vs. a member of an opposition party also changes the “ask” a lot of the time. Additionally, letters that are personalized to a local context are much more effective and have a greater chance of catching a politician's eye—especially if it is made clear why the issue is important to their constituents.

For these reasons, the template letters provided here should be used as general templates, to be personalized and built on by CFUW Clubs and individuals. Use your knowledge of your community to strengthen the letters, and engage your representatives by making specific requests on which they are capable of acting. Feel free to include details about your CFUW Club, such as how many members you have, the causes you support, and the money you raise. Consider including a personal or local story that illustrates the issue for your context. And if you wish to do so, suggest meeting with the representative face-to-face to discuss the issue more fully.

In the Word documents, remember to fill in the relevant information where any text is written in red. Please send copies of your letters to advocacy@cfuw-fcfd.ca so that CFUW National can see and learn from all the personalized letters you're sending!

Links To Template Letters

English and French Versions Available

Addressing Period Poverty and Menstrual Inequity in Canada

Template Letter [English](#) - [French](#)

Expanding Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Services

Template Letter [English](#) - [French](#)

Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Rights

Template Letter [English](#) - [French](#)

Strengthening the Awareness and Safekeeping of Individuals and Their Animals Experiencing Domestic Violence

Template Letter [English](#) - [French](#)

Equitable Phase-Out of Fossil Fuels

Template Letter [English](#) - [French](#)

Affirming Housing as a Human Right and Social Good

Template Letter [English](#) - [French](#)

Combined Bibliographies

**We have combined all the bibliographies by
Resolution number and linked them
HERE.**



cfuw fcfd

Realizing potential. For all women.
Le pouvoir par le savoir.

**815 St. Laurent Blvd, Suite 230
Ottawa, Ontario
K1K 3A7**

**The City of Ottawa is located on the unceded and traditional
territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation.**



613-234-8252



@cfuwfcfd



www.cfuw.org



@cfuw.fcfd



advocacy@cfuw-fcfd.ca