



Founded 1949

BRIEF

For Presentation To

THE GOVERNMENT OF MANITOBA

**The Honourable Gary Doer
Premier**

2005

By

**THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF
MANITOBA, INC.**

Mary Scott, President

September, 2005

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PRESENTATION OF BRIEF TO THE PREMIER AND THE MANITOBA EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL

September 29th, 1:00 pm

Room 234, Legislative Building

Chair for the Executive Council
Chair for the PCWM

Honourable Gary Doer
Mary Scott

AGENDA

Introductions and Comments
Introductions and Comments

Premier Gary Doer
Mary Scott

Process of the Brief:

- a) Introduction of the Specific Section by PCWM President
- b) PCWM Background Speaker on the Issue/Resolution (2-3 minutes)
- c) Response/Dialogue with relevant Minister on Resolution (5 minutes)
- d) PCWM has appointed a timekeeper to keep track of the speakers and discussion

Order of the Issues Under Discussion

Commendations

Reiterations

Child Care
Dental Hygienists
Gambling

Current Concerns and Government Responses

Land Use/Planning
Poverty and Minimum Wage
Housing & Homelessness
Freedom of Information
Health, Mental Health & Vulnerable Persons
Gender Based Analysis
Human Rights of Aboriginal Women
Emerging Issues: Protection of Family Law; PPPs; Defined Benefits Pension
Plans

Resolutions Co Chairs

Muriel Smith & Sharon Taylor

Summary

Mary Scott

Observers present include individual members and federates representatives of PCWM and Council of Women of Winnipeg

PREAMBLE

The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba (PCWM) is pleased to present its 2005 Brief to the Government of Manitoba. Since PCWM was formed in 1949, it has brought views and concerns to the Premier and Cabinet on a regular basis, most recently in 2001. It is important to keep in mind the Council is a volunteer organization, with no paid staff, and receives no funds from government.

The Provincial Council is a federation of organizations of women, or men and women, and individual members, whose purpose is to improve the social conditions for the family and the nation by public education and representations to Government. We work by a resolution process – all resolutions are debated and voted on by each representative of a federate member of Council and then become policy. The policies you see before you in this Brief have been developed through such a process. The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) presents an annual Brief to the Federal Government.

The National Council of Women of Canada, founded in 1893, consists of 6 provincial groups, 38 local branches and is affiliated with 28 nationally organized societies. NCWC is a member of the International Council of Women, comprised of National Councils in over 75 countries, and has consultative status with ECOSOC, the UN's Economic and Social Council.

Councils of Women exist at the local, provincial, national and international levels. Although Councils have pioneered improvement of the status of Canadian women, energies are not directed exclusively to women's concerns. Rather, we respond on many issues which face civil society. Councils of Women are non-political and do not receive government funding. Our common purpose draws support from people from all parties, and from a variety of social, economic, religious and ethnic backgrounds.

The policies contained in this Brief focus on issues that are provincial in scope although they may also have national significance. They include the policies approved by PCWM since the last full submission in 1997 and a selected number from NCWC, focusing on those with a provincial responsibility.

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF MANITOBA

FEDERATE MEMBERS OF THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF MANITOBA, INC.

- Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
- Canadian Federation of University Women –Manitoba Council
- Consumers Association of Canada (Manitoba) Inc.
- Council of Women of Winnipeg
- Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba
- Girl Guides of Canada, MB. Council
- Immigrant Women’s Association of Manitoba, Inc.
- Manitoba Association of Home Economists
- Manitoba Association of Women & the Law
- Manitoba Association of Women’s Shelters
- Manitoba Business and Professional Women’s Clubs
- Manitoba Child Care Association
- Manitoba Dental Hygienist’s Association
- Manitoba Hydro, Employment Equity
- Manitoba & NW Ontario Synodical Society, WMS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada
- Manitoba Women in Trades & Technology
- MORN (Mother Of Red Nations Women’s Council of Manitoba)
- Osborne House
- Prairie Women’s Health Centre of Excellence
- Reseau action femmes (Manitoba)
- Salvation Army
- Ukrainian Women’s Association of Canada (Mb. Branch)
- UN Platform for Action Committee, Mb.
- Wolseley Family Place
- Women’s Enterprise Centre
- Women’s Health Clinic
- Women’s Health Research Foundation of Canada

COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF WINNIPEG FEDERATES

- Alpha Delta Pi Alumnae
- Alpha Gamma Delta Alumnae
- Alpha Omega Alumnae
- Altrusa International of Winnipeg
- League of Ukrainian Women in Canada
- OSU Children's Library Fund
- Retired Women's Teachers' Association
- Salvation Army Women's Ministry
- Schoolmasters' Wives Association
- Soroptimist International of Winnipeg
- Ukrainian Canadian Women's Committee
- Ukrainian Women's Association - Knahynia Olha
- Ukrainian Womens Association - Lesia Ukrainka
- Ukrainian Women's Organization
- University Women's Club of Winnipeg
- Westminster United Church - Outreach Committee
- Westworth United Church UCW
- Winnipeg General Hospital and HSC School of Nursing Alumnae
- YM-YWCA of Winnipeg
- Young United Church UCW

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF CANADA

Provincial Councils of Women

- British Columbia
- Manitoba
- Ontario
- Quebec
- Saskatchewan

Local Councils of Women

- Edmonton, AB
- Halifax, NS
- Hamilton and District, ON
- London and Area, ON
- Montreal, QC
- New Westminster, BC
- Ottawa, ON
- Prince Albert, SK
- Regina, SK
- St. Catharines & District, ON
- Saskatoon, SK
- Toronto and Area, ON
- Vancouver, BC
- Victoria, BC
- White Rock and District, BC
- Windsor, ON
- Winnipeg, MB

Study Groups

- New Burnaby, BC
- Sunshine Coast, BC

National Organizations Affiliated with NCWC

- Action Canada for Population and Development
- Anglican Church of Canada
- Association of Public Service Alliance Retirees

- Canadian Abortion Rights Action League
- Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies
- Canadian Council of Muslim Women
- Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs
- DES Action Canada
- Federation of Junior Leagues
- Girl Guides of Canada
- Hadassah-WIZO Organization Of Canada
- Na'amat Canada
- National Association of Women and the Law
- National Consultation of Women of the United Church
- National Women's Liberal Commission
- Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada
- Polish Canadian Women's Federation
- Polish Alliance of Canada Ladies Circle Groups 1-7
- The Salvation Army
- Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada Ukrainian Women's Organization of Canada
- Women's Missionary Society (W.D) of the Presbyterian Church in Canada
- YWCA of/du Canada

INTRODUCTION

The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba representing some 27 Manitoba organizations has been active in a number of areas and their work represents many hours of volunteer time, supporting a variety of community interests and needs. In our Brief we will mention and support work done by some of our Federates. Some of the highlights of our actions, from 2001 to 2005 are found in Appendix one.

We wish to raise our concerns today about provincial policy and action (or lack of) in a number of areas. Our Brief will focus on social and health issues, the environment and comments on strengthening the interaction between groups such as the Provincial Council and government.

Major points that have been raised in previous Briefs that will be raised again in this Brief, **continue to focus on poverty as a key issue for women and children:**

1. Maintaining the status of Manitoba as the Child Poverty Capital of Canada. **Fact:** Manitoba has the highest percentage of households with children who have been poor since 1996 and female lone parent led families in Manitoba remain among the poorest of all families in Canada. The inadequacy of income assistance benefits and the minimum wage are significant contributors to the depth of poverty in Manitoba;
2. Continuing to work at alleviating the root causes of poverty, not just treating the symptoms;

Other considerations:

1. Supporting government departments working together, coordinating, and sharing jurisdictional authority in a collaborative fashion;
2. Making full use of the energy, commitment, talents and skills of Manitoba women within government and on boards and task forces.
3. Ensuring fair and open government, and an opportunity for real public participation before decisions are made;
4. Recognizing the value of our natural resources and the environment and planning not just for short term gain;
5. Enforcing legislated plans and regulations already in place or when amendments are proposed, ensuring meaningful community consultation before implementation.

We wish to thank the MLAs who have taken the time to read the Brief and to set aside time to dialogue further with our members.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba, Inc., is an organization that reflects the diversity, the history, and the commitment of member organizations and individual members to improving the quality of life for Manitobans.

This Brief captures the policies that have been approved at the provincial and national level and that reflect PCWM's work since 1997. During that period there has been a good working relationship with many of the provincial departments, ministers and staff.

The Brief highlights the concerns of our members, namely:

- Access to information;
- Accountability and policy regarding gambling and gambling revenues;
- Child Care;
- Land Use and land use planning, particularly applying concepts of Sustainable Development;
- Health, in particular - self regulation of Dental Hygienists, Mental Health, FASD, HIV/AIDS, language barriers in the health care system, and accreditation;
- Human Rights and Aboriginal Women;
- Poverty and Minimum Wage;
- Gender based analysis of government policy and budgets.

Many of the PCWM policies point to poverty as the underlying issue for women in Manitoba, as they and their families struggle with surviving on less than a living wage. Supports such as child care and social assistance and minimum wage increases, are essential.

PCWM urges the government to listen to the voices of aboriginal women in all the decisions affecting their lives.

The health care system must be seen as more than delivery of services. It must be seen within the context of women's social and economic lives.

Applying sustainable development principles in the planning of Manitoba urban communities is the recommended direction to follow, to make the most effective use of our resources. Enforcement of existing legislation and regulations in land use is also essential to assure fairness and public trust in all decisions.

Government would be well served to have a more open policy about sharing information in a timely fashion, and to support accountability, particularly regarding gambling revenues.

And finally, PCWM urges the government to seriously consider applying a gender lens (Gender Based Analysis) in the development of provincial policy and budgets.

COMMENDATIONS

- We would like to begin with recognition of the significant support from and work by the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council. This includes the weekly Council Currents, the Brown Bag Lunches with outstanding speakers and topics for discussion, the Round Table discussions (such as the Round Tables on Violence against Women), and the support services for community organizations, such as photocopying.
- We recognize the progress with Child Care and we note with pride that Manitoba was the first province to sign a bilateral agreement on early learning and child care with the federal government.
- We recognize the persistent effort to protect and enhance public health care.
- We appreciate the community budget consultation process, held throughout the province.
- We are pleased that the Minister of Justice has supported raising the age of consent to 16, from 14, while including a specific exemption for 14 to 16 year olds exploring their sexuality. We see this as a positive measure to protect children from sexual exploitation.
- We commend the excellent decision to establish additional women's community based reproductive health services through the Women's Health Clinic and look forward to the timely release of a report being prepared by the Maternal/New Born Working Group.
- We commend the amendments contained in Bill 10, The Gaming Control Amendment Act, giving the Manitoba Gaming Control Commission (MGCC) additional authority. The amendments deal in part with recommendations made by the Office of the Auditor General of Manitoba's report on aboriginal gambling and are a welcome start towards more openness and accountability in gambling in Manitoba.

1. REITERATIONS

1.1 Quality Child Care

Background

PCWM and their federate, the Manitoba Child Care Association (MCCA) would like to commend the Province of Manitoba for their support of many of the recommendations from the association. The MCCA appreciates what they call a “child friendly” climate in their relationship with government.

However, although the Province of Manitoba has increased funding for the child care program by 51% since 2000, the workforce shortage remains critical. In 2004, 38% of licensed centres are unable to meet the trained staff requirements of The Community Child Care Standards Act. This is an increase of 5% from 2001 when 33% were unable to meet trained staff requirements.

Therefore, the first priority should be enhancements to compensation, recruitment strategies, province wide training opportunities and training assistance for centre based and family child care providers. A comprehensive and serious strategy, similar in priority, energy and scope to that of the health care sector must be implemented immediately.

There is also serious shortage of regulated child care spaces in urban and rural areas. Only 14% of Manitoba's children have access to a regulated child care space (Healthy Child Manitoba, 2004). This is a significant barrier for workforce attachment, access to job training, and women's equality. Related issues are access to child care for shift workers, and seasonal workers, such as during harvesting on farms.

MCCA recommends:

1. An increase to centre revenues to enable the majority to implement our Minimum Salary Guidelines Scale for Group Child Care Centres Phase IV .
2. An increase to family child care grants to ensure their incomes will increase by 10% by 2007 – as promised in the Five Year Plan.

Other priority areas include:

- Quality Enhancement Projects *Upgrading facilities, purchase of materials, supplies, equipment (with special consideration to remote or northern locations).*
- Major Capital projects *Funds for new child care facilities*
- Governance *Resource and support service be created for Boards of Directors*
- Accreditation *Funding needed to develop a voluntary accreditation system for Manitoba's Licensed Child Care Facilities*
- Licensing and Regulation *To ensure basic health and safety for children attending licensed family child care homes facilities should be inspected by certified fire and health authorities.*

On April 29, 2005, The Government of Manitoba and the Government of Canada signed the bilateral agreement *Moving Forward on Early Learning and Child Care*. Between 2005-2010, Manitoba may receive \$176M from the federal government for early learning and child care. However, the funding hinges on the passing for the federal budget. The Manitoba Child Care Association expects the provincial government to invest every penny of federal funding in the child care budget, and insist none be used to replace existing spending.

One final point regarding Child Care, is that there must be flexibility in the system, one that looks at family supports, is comprehensive, and recognizes the cultural diversity of Manitoba's families. There are important distinctions between child care and family support that need to be recognized. "Child care services traditionally focus on children's needs for supplementary care while their parents are working or studying, or for children with special needs.... [The focus on children is their primary work.] While family support share with child care services a basic concern for the well being and development of healthy children, and affirm the need for families to have ready access to public provisions for high quality, affordable, and [universal] supplementary child care.

Family support focus on families' needs for support across the life span, and on providing assistance to children, parents, grandparents and other caregivers in a number of areas which go beyond child care. Adult development is as important as child development." (Kyle, 1994)

**PCWM Policy
95-02 Support for Quality Child Care**

RESOLVED that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba urges the Government of Manitoba to support the goals of a fully accessible, non-profit system of comprehensive, flexible and high quality child care, worthy wages and good working conditions, funded jointly by government and parents, and be it further

RESOLVED that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba urges the Government of Manitoba to outline its plan for enhancements to the existing child care system, recognizing the current deterrents to access and affordability, and taking advantage of new child care funding available from the Federal Government, Human Resources and Development

1.2. Reduction of Gambling in Manitoba

The escalation of gambling profits compared to family bankruptcies, breakdowns and suicides as well as the overall health and social implications need immediate scrutiny.

We therefore reiterate the PCWM recommendation proposed at the Standing Committee hearing on Bill 10, June 7 2004 that, in the tenth year after the Desjardins report, ***the Government of Manitoba appoint an all-party, Manitoba Lottery Policy Review Working Group of knowledgeable people to consult the public and to re-evaluate the social and economic impacts of the gambling industry in Manitoba so as to ensure that the best interests of Manitobans are being served.*** This recommendation was reaffirmed by our membership at our semi-annual meeting on "Taking Chances: Gambling on Manitoba's Future", held November 20, 2004.

The will of the majority of Manitobans surveyed for the Desjardins Report in 1995 was to reduce the level of gambling in Manitoba. We therefore reiterate our recommendation to maintain the moratorium on:

- (1) the total number of VLTs in Manitoba; and
- (2) any additional casino sites.

It is of concern that four more casinos either on reserves or sponsored by Aboriginal people have been promised by Government whenever a suitable business plan is presented.

We continue to urge the Government to pursue other means of economic development and taxation to reduce its dependency on net gambling profits transferred to general revenues or used to balance the provincial operating budget. We noticed with concern that in March 2004, the Minister of Finance directed the MGCC to provide a one-time revenue sharing payment of \$1 million to the Province for the 2004-05 fiscal year.

The PCWM continues to urge the Government to ensure by amended legislation that the MGCC is visibly non-political, unbiased, knowledgeable and efficient and given appropriate authority. As long as MGCC is economically dependent on registration fees from Manitoba Lotteries Corporation (MLC) and virtually invisible, it cannot be recognized as the guardian of the public interest. It is always the Minister responsible for the MGCC, rather than the Chairperson or the Executive Director, who speaks in public for the Commission. Several questions follow related to our concerns:

- Why was *the* survey (Manitobans and Gambling) conducted by MGCC in the Fall, 2003 only published when the Minister responsible released the Commission's 2003-04 Annual Report in January, 2005? A fifteen month gap does not appear to be reasonable.
- Why did MGCC itself not test the technical integrity of the new, faster VLT machines introduced by MLC in the summer of 2004? Surely that is the responsibility of MGCC not MLC or the manufacturers. The public needs to be made aware of how much more addictive these new machines are.

We are concerned that Aboriginal peoples on reserve are not aware of the distribution of gambling *profits* when, according to the MGCC's Annual Report 2003/04, six gaming commissions were not functioning and seven were non-compliant

We are also concerned about MLC's apparent take-over of the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba (AFM) and MGCC's research and responsible gambling roles as announced in MLC's press release January 28, 2005. To have the Lotteries Corporation take on these responsibilities is a **clear conflict of interest**. We stress the importance of facilitating independent research and of avoiding duplication of research being done elsewhere. **We suggest that the Government follow the legislation in Bill 10 and ensure that the MGCC carries out the duties given to it in the Act.**

We reiterate our recommendation that the Government segregate net income from gambling from consolidated government accounts. The public should not be misled by advertising that suggests the profits go to worthy causes such as one sees on VLT screens and some signage. It is apparent that all net income goes into General Revenue and loses accountability.

MLC determines the allocations that go to Aboriginal bands, corporate sponsorships, charitable organizations, the AFM for its gaming counselling, education projects, responsible gaming and research programs. They are deducted by MLC before the net profit is transferred to the Government.. We would urge a more open detailed accounting of these allocations that are currently controlled by the MLC Board and staff.

Our recommendation is to prohibit all “lifestyle” advertising by both the MLC and Western Canada Lotteries Corporation This is not done well as we see enticing advertisements on television as well as in flyers from Assiniboine Downs. We also question the targeting of seniors and rural residents with pocket money and free transportation to the casinos on a regular basis.

PCWM Policy

96-02 Reduction of Gambling in Manitoba

RESOLVED that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba urge the Government of Manitoba:

- to acknowledge the will of the majority to reduce the level of gambling in Manitoba and
- to maintain its moratorium on the expansion of VLT's and additional casino sites and to extend it to all forms of telephone or interactive television at-home betting and
- to pursue other means of economic development and taxation to reduce government dependence on gambling revenue used to balance the provincial operating budget or to fund essential programs or services and
- to ensure that the proposed Gaming Commission is non-political, unbiased, knowledgeable and efficient and given appropriate authority as recommended in the Working Group Report and
- to continue to segregate gambling revenue, net income and allocations from consolidated government accounts and
- to prohibit all promotional “lifestyle” advertising by both the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation and the Western Canada Lotteries Corporation and be it further

RESOLVED that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba urge the National Council of Women of Canada to urge the Canadian Radio and Television Commission (CRTC) to refrain from issuing licenses for telephone and interactive television betting and gambling.

1.3 Self-Regulation of Manitoba Dental Hygienists

Background

- The Provincial Council of Women passed a resolution in 1992 on the self regulation of Manitoba Dental Hygienists,
- Dental Hygienists in Manitoba are currently regulated by the Manitoba Dental Association, and the Manitoba Law Reform Commission has observed that regulation of one profession by another does not serve to protect the public and in fact perpetuates monopolies over services,

- 92% of dental hygienists in Canada practice in provinces where they are self-regulated , Manitoba being the only province west of New Brunswick that is regulated by dentistry,
- The Manitoba Dental Hygienists Association supports the removal of restrictive supervision to allow increased public access to dental hygiene services,
- The dental hygienist’s role in the prevention of oral disease, particularly gum disease, is no small matter. In addition to the more commonly known effects of dental disease, oral infections are increasingly being linked to heart disease, upper respiratory infections, and low birth weight, pre-term babies,
- Dental hygienists are licensed oral health professionals who serve the public in oral disease prevention, intervention and health promotion. Their scope of practice includes the provision of preventive, educational and therapeutic services for both individuals and the community,
- Currently for dental hygienists there are minimal quality assurance provisions, and registrants are not required to successfully complete the National Dental Hygiene Certification Examination,
- Manitobans can currently only access dental hygiene preventive and therapeutic services when a dentist is physically present. MDHA supports the removal of restrictive supervision to allow increased public access to dental hygiene services,
- The Government of the Province of Manitoba in the past thirteen years has failed to address the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba’s original resolution,
- The Provincial Council believes that Manitoba Dental Hygienists are ready to take on this important responsibility and strongly endorses the concept of the self regulation Bill that is to be considered by the Manitoba Legislature.

PCWM Policy

02 Policy Update Self-Regulation of Manitoba Dental Hygienists

#1 Resolved that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba continues to support the self-regulation of Manitoba Dental Hygienists, and

#2 Resolved that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba urge the Government of Manitoba to legislate self-regulation for Manitoba Dental Hygienists in a timely manner.

2. CURRENT CONCERNS – PCWM POLICY

2.1 Land Use Planning

Land Use Planning in Manitoba

Around 1900, the Councils of Women in most large Canadian cities became active in urban reform through the Parks and Playgrounds movement. Councils across Canada lobbied for open space, playgrounds and child welfare. They organized seasonal recreational activities in working class areas.

The Council of Women of Winnipeg addressed the first Plan Winnipeg, the city's long term development plan in the 1980s. At the time, the Minister of Urban Affairs, Gary

Doer, made determined efforts to ensure that City Council adopted the first Plan Winnipeg, including an Urban Limit Line that was later rescinded.

The Winnipeg and Manitoba Councils of Women participated in the statutory public consultations on the two subsequent reviews. Between reviews, we addressed a number of amendments to Plan Winnipeg at both the City and Municipal Board levels, most recently in 2003 regarding development that threatens public safety on the Trans-Canada Highway, west of the Perimeter Highway. We have also spoken to land use planning outside Winnipeg - in the Winnipeg region and beyond. All of these efforts are part of the public record.

Why is a federation of women's group promoting sound land use planning? The answer is that millions of women raise their families in rural areas, towns and cities across Canada. Many women in the Province think globally and act locally. Through the Councils of Women, women and women's groups are active in housing, community planning and sustainable development issues.

The Councils' (Council of Women of Winnipeg and the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba) work on land use in Manitoba is based on resolutions on:

*Ground Water Quality (1991);

*Informed and Effective Representation for Citizens of Winnipeg in the Winnipeg Region Strategy (1992);

*Integrated Decision-Making in Land Use Planning, Environmental Management and Protection in Manitoba (1995);

*Responsible Land Use Management around Manitoba's Existing Urban Centres, 1996);

*Freedom of Information (1999) re public registry of land use planning and resource use activities.

*We also have National resolutions on environmental protection, especially on water protection.

It should be noted that neither Council opposes timely, well-planned development that is based on demonstrated need and uses contiguous land and existing services wherever possible.

Enforcement Of Existing Legislation

We are also involved in land use planning to defend the public interest. There are laws, regulations and by-laws like Plan Winnipeg on the books. However, we observe that often they are not enforced. For example, the Sustainable Development Act was adopted in 1998. The statute calls for round table member appointments and a minimum of three meetings per year. As of May 2005, this Government is in violation of the Act and has been for some time as there are no members or meetings scheduled. The public is misled into thinking there is meaningful sustainable development legislation being enforced when, in fact, the government is in breach of the legislation. There seems to be a choice here – *either implement the existing Act, or amend and enforce it.*

- How does the Government plan to be seen to be implementing sustainable development throughout its operations?

There is evidence that the relationship between planning applicants and the Government-of-the-day has more bearing on land use planning decisions than the provincial land use policies regulation (PLUP), the Planning Act or the City of Winnipeg Charter Act. It appears to many that, in fact, land use planning in Manitoba often has more to do with political, social and financial relationships between developers and governments than it does with laws, regulations, policies or development plans. The public loses confidence in its elected leaders and public institutions when this type of political decision-making appears to take over.

Waverley West and Municipal Board

At no time in the last 25 years has PCWM been so cognizant of the political nature of planning in Manitoba as in the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation's application to amend Plan Winnipeg immediately and to proceed with the redesignation of the whole of Waverley West. A private-sector-only developer would have been told to wait until 2006 for the next overall Plan review especially for a 40 year plan covering such a huge tract of land. But the government's determination to rush the application through city council and to approve its own development without an objective review dominated the process. The Government's conflict of interest as both regulator and applicant is blatant (as commented on by the Winnipeg Free Press, March 24th and April 2nd, 2005) and so is the use of the Minister's power to make the ruling without further consultation. Government money that flows to Waverley West means a corresponding decrease in investment in the city's existing neighbourhoods. We urge the government to divest itself of its land holding in Waverley West.

Even after the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs received 22 letters of objection, he proceeded to approve the Waverley West Amendment without a Municipal Board hearing. At the same time, the Minister's office called a single objector to another Plan Winnipeg amendment (deletion of the Oak Point Transit Corridor) to say that it would be referred to a Municipal Board hearing. Then, instead, the Government suddenly reneged on this and proceeded to approve outright a total of five Plan amendments without any Municipal Board referrals.

For all these reasons, the Government appears to have failed to honour the land use planning process in Manitoba. The NDP Caucus 2- pager, "Why Waverley West" sent out in April 2005, gave only one side of the issue, adding insult to injury. The opportunity to have an independent review of the widely different consultants' reports presented to an open forum at the Municipal Board would have been the preferred option once it was clear that the Government could not wait for this amendment to form part of the next Plan Winnipeg review in 2006. We were appalled at the amount of staff time at both the municipal and provincial levels that was expended on this issue as well as the number of outside consultants' reports commissioned. We were also appalled by the huge volume of staff hours spent on this proposal under time pressure when, in reality, there cannot be any more development opened up in the south-west until the roads and other infrastructure are upgraded and in place. The cost was too high for the result obtained. Public trust in the Government's decisions has been diminished by these self-interested choices.

- We ask, how can the Government overcome its bias in land use planning and infrastructure funding decisions, etc., as long as it is both the owner and developer of Waverley West?

- Does the Government consider *Plan Winnipeg-toward 2020* binding legislation?
- How is the Government going to restore public trust and confidence in land use planning in Winnipeg after Plan Winnipeg has been so badly breached?

Capital Region

PCWM reiterates its resolutions on Informed and Effective Representation for Citizens of Winnipeg in the Winnipeg Region Strategy; Responsible Land Use Management around Manitoba's Existing Urban Centres; and Freedom of Information. The Capital Region Partnership Act offers no plan of action. It makes no mention of public participation - let alone consultation - in the future of the region.

Could the Government issue a discussion paper as part of the next Plan Winnipeg review to inform the people of the region and then engage them in meaningful public consultation on the capital region?

- Why is the amalgamation of municipalities that wish to offer urban level services to their residents not a valid component of any discussion or capital region legislation?

PCWM Policy

97- 01 Responsible Land Use Management Around Manitoba's Existing Urban Centres

RESOLVED that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba request the Government of Manitoba to take immediate action:

1. to safeguard the Province's environmental and economic future for succeeding generations by responsible land use planning now,
2. to conform with the Provincial Land Use Policy Regulation,
3. to require planners, lawyers and the Municipal Board to specifically and openly record the compliance of draft development plans, development plan amendments and subdivision applications with the Provincial Land Use Policies,
4. to clearly base Government approval or rejection of any overall or individual development plans on these publicly available, professional assessments,
5. to prepare, approve and implement, by March 31, 1997, an overall, comprehensive long-term plan for responsible land use in the Capital Region; and

RESOLVED that the Council of Women of Winnipeg urge the City of Winnipeg to use the process of review of neighbouring municipalities' land use plans to formally object when those plans will conflict with Plan Winnipeg's strategy of containment and revitalization.

2.2 Minimum Wage

Restore Just Value to the Minimum Wage

PCWM has tracked a marked decline in the value of the minimum wage since the seventies, and in 1999 passed a resolution that called for the minimum wage to be raised to cover the basic costs of living and then indexed to a poverty measure so that it maintains its value at or above the poverty line. In 2004 PCWM updated its resolution to stress that minimum wage policy is not only a poverty issue but a human rights issue as well.

The lack of progress on the elimination of poverty and protection for the right to a just wage through minimum wage policy points to a lack of political will and commitment to address the declining conditions of the working poor who are increasingly turning to food banks to survive from paycheck to paycheck.

The NDP Government, raised the Minimum Wage rate 25 cents to \$7.25 on April 1, 2005. Nineteen cents of the recent increase will be eaten by inflation and 6 cents will barely cover a recent transit fare increase or increased pension contributions. Thus full time workers receiving minimum wage will stay at least 25% below the poverty line, unable to cover more than 72.5% of their needs using 100% of their income. Projections based on the past five years show that for the next 20 years, 25 cent annual increases would serve only to maintain the relative value of the Manitoba Minimum Wage at 25% to 30% below the poverty line for a single full-time/full-year worker.

The new \$7.25 minimum wage would require a 38% increase to raise it to \$10.00, the current generally accepted wage required to allow a single person working full time for a year at minimum wage to live at or near the poverty line. No one expects the rate to be raised by 38% all in one year but since 1999 it could have (and should have) been put on a trajectory toward the poverty line that would have brought it up to a living wage while keeping the legitimate needs of workers and business interests equitably in mind. (A 50 cent per hour annual increase or a constant 6%, added each year from 2000 to 2007 inclusive, would have resulted in a \$10.00 per hour minimum wage in 2008. The actual 25 cent increases were 4% declining to 3.4% over 5 years to reach \$7.25 in April, 2005.) That the relative value of the minimum wage is so low is a testament to a lack of balance in minimum wage policy in Manitoba and the other provinces who use each other's rates to rationalize their own.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and United Nations Covenants, to which we as a province and as a nation are committed require signing nations to ensure that no person is paid less than just and favourable remuneration for work. In the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, this meant sufficient income to support a family, not just one individual. The reduced ideal of a minimum wage sufficient to support one worker was close to realization in 1975 in Manitoba, and the persistent erosion since then portends a permanent shift in priorities away from fulfillment of these commitments.

The minimum wage was designed to protect workers from exploitation and poverty, not as an economic tool to create a competitive advantage for doing business in Manitoba. Changes to the minimum wage do not affect the competitiveness of small Manitoba-based businesses that employ a great many of the minimum wage workers, as they all face the same minimum wage costs. Low paid work results in increased public costs to provide for families of workers.

A minimum wage level that contributes to pernicious poverty is counter-intuitive, counter-productive, undervalues human labour and serves the most cynical of business interests at the expense of children and the social and economic wellbeing of the communities where they live. It lacks the 'balance' between the interests of workers and business owners, which the government has stated to be the justification for the current Manitoba Minimum Wage policy.

A Minimum Wage policy de-linked from politics and governed by an independent prosperity/poverty measure has a greater chance of balancing business owners' and workers' interests than the present process can demonstrate. The working poor class can expect to continue in their poverty unless the scales are balanced. It is in the economic interests of all Manitobans to raise the lowest incomes and protect the right to just remuneration for work.

Women's Inequality and Child Poverty

Women's economic inequality is abundantly evident in the minimum wage data. Women are also more likely to work part-time, and part-time jobs are more likely to be lower paid. Low earnings in the working years translates into poverty as women age. Over half of single women over the age of 65 in Manitoba live in poverty.

Poor moms have poor kids. Manitoba's present low minimum wage policy is ensuring that one-quarter of working single women and their children remain poor. Having children doesn't stop women from working, but a low minimum wage does! This should provide a powerful incentive to increase the minimum wage and otherwise make it possible for women with children who can't afford to work for the minimum wage to leave social assistance behind.

Manitoba Low Wage Community Inquiry

PCWM is a partner in the Just Income Coalition, a group of more than 25 community, faith, women's, Labour and Aboriginal organizations and individual volunteers who are working together for a just income for all Manitobans. The coalition recently undertook to hold hearings into low pay and low wage work issues including the minimum wage. The Inquiry was structured to include the voices of low wage workers and community workers who work with them on their poverty issues. This contrasts with the legislated structure and mandate of Minimum Wage Boards which exclude low paid workers or community service workers. PCWM has long-standing policy, which recommends changes to the structure of these boards to include community voices.

In May 2005, the Inquiry panel of leaders in the community and labour and business fields listened to the experiences of many individuals living in low wage circumstances in Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson.

Paid to be Poor: 2005 Manitoba Low Wage Community Inquiry Report

Paid to be Poor was released in September 2005. The findings in Chapter 3, 'What We Heard', paint a grim and worsening picture of hardship and misery among the 27% of workers in Manitoba who earn less than \$10.25 per hour, that has not been altered by new policy under this government. The report adopts Ten Core Principles that are essential to protect the most vulnerable workers in Manitoba and then offers a range of strategies to address the decline in wages and conditions of work among the lowest paid. One of the strategies put forward calls for increasing the minimum wage – more rapidly now due to the urgency of the situation - toward a living wage with other necessary supports put in place such as strengthened and vigorously enforced employment standards and encouraging and assisting worker representation in the work place.

Living Wage Policy – Starting with Government

The report also recommends that government contracts with companies that hire employees to fulfil the contracts require the companies to pay a living wage to the employees on the principle that public moneys should not be used to support poverty. Contractors who pay less cheat not only the government but the public who foot the bill for the social services costs of poverty incurred through low wages. This principle would apply to provincial funding for municipalities who contract out. – a recent case in point being the privatization of garbage collection in the City of Winnipeg which, it has been reported, is going to result in garbage collectors being paid less than \$9.00 per hour while the city employees were paid over \$18.00 per hour. \$9.00 does not support one person while \$18.00 barely supports a family of three. Who is going to pay the difference?

A living wage standard in government contracts and in the minimum wage policy would send a clear signal to workers and employers that Manitoba is not going to sacrifice the well-being of our resident population on the alter of 'competitiveness' - that it supports other values as well.

PCWM Policy

99-01 Minimum Wage

RESOLVED that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba urge the Government of Manitoba:

- to recognize the minimum wage as a tool to fight poverty and
- to raise the minimum wage as quickly as possible to the level that covers "the cost to an employee of purchasing the necessities of life and health" and
- to legislate regular review and adjustment that keeps the minimum wage in line with the cost of living and
- to amend the legislation so that the Minimum Wage Board membership is composed of community representatives and persons qualified to address the legislative intent of Section 28(5) of the Employment Standards Act (1987).

PCWM Policy

2003 Minimum Wage, And The Employment Standards Code

Resolved That the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba urge the Government of Manitoba to:

- a. Recognize the principles of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 23 (3);
- b. Implement one "just and favourable" minimum wage for every worker in Manitoba regardless of age, sex, marital or family status/living arrangements;
- c. Raise the minimum wage by increments at six month intervals until it reaches the "living wage" level and then tie future regular annual increases to an appropriate standard such as the CPI or the average industrial wage;
- d. Amend *The Employment Standards Code* to:
 - 1) restore the directive that the Minimum Wage Board is obliged to consider the costs of purchasing the necessities of life and health when recommending what is "just and favourable remuneration" according to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
 - 2) ensure the participation of neutral* representatives of the community who are qualified to address the amended intent of the Code, in consultation with workers and employers, on any future Minimum Wage Board.

(*neutral meaning non stakeholder, such as social work, clergy, academic)

2.3 Freedom of Information

General Comments

PCWM commends the Manitoba Legislative Assembly for putting more information such as Statutes, Bills, House and Committee Business and Hansard, on its web-site. This information should still be accessible to people without internet access.

Reiteration

PCWM reiterates that access to information held by a public body should be a fundamental right and should only be limited where there is clear and definite basis for doing so. Without access to information, citizens are unable to hold their elected representatives to account or to participate in current affairs in a meaningful way.

PCWM made a presentation to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act Review as part of the Manitoba Access to Information Network (MATIN) on 14 May 2004 and in additional comments which are on file.

The greatest contribution that government could make to improve access is for the Premier himself to communicate his strong commitment to access through the cabinet and the deputy ministers. This was reported in the Canadian Information Annual Report (1997) and it did have a positive effect for some time. We would urge the current Premier to make such a commitment.

Concerns

In the House, the Government has repeatedly evaded valid requests for information about the Manitoba Housing Renewal Corporation's application to develop its South Fort Garry Land Bank (Waverley West). Access has to be timely to be of use. MHRC waited until the week before Christmas 2004 to release its July 2004 Waverley West Financial Cost-Benefit Analysis to the public. We had asked for at least two months lead time, three if it was over the holiday, to study the 40-page document in order to provide informed comment. By withholding access for so long, MHRC prevented informed citizen participation in the January 4, 2005 public hearing.

We urge MHRC to publish annual reports according to the Accountability Framework in the CMHC - Manitoba Affordable Housing Program Agreement (signed September 20, 2002 and effective retroactively to January 1, 2001). Enforcing public reporting schedules helps prevent corruption and contributes to greater public trust and accountability.

If the Government is drawing up public-private-partnership agreements, (please note the resolution which was approved at the last National Council of Women of Canada AGM, objecting to PPPs, and referenced on page 38) there must be a government policy to write in "openness" instead of "confidentiality" clauses and put those agreements in the public domain.

Enforcing public reporting schedules helps prevent corruption and contributes to greater public trust and accountability which we all support.

There is considerable range of responses to requests for public information from government officials. We would urge the Government to commit to ensuring ongoing training within the public service to encourage a culture of routine and informal release of information, without going the laborious route of a formal application.

There is backlog upon backlog of FIPPA complaints in the Office of the Ombudsman. The case of Ms. Mimi Raglan, whose brief was presented in May 2004, is evidence of the unacceptable management of FIPPA complaints. Ms. Raglan had to persevere for three years to obtain, under FIPPA, approximately 95% of the results of the investigation into her mother's health care. We would urge the Manitoba Legislative Assembly and the Ombudman to set targets to reduce and eliminate the backlogs.

When we last met with the NDP caucus in September 2001, the Premier gave us an assurance that the study on ministerial roles and responsibilities regarding Manitoba's crown corporations would be made available to the public. Each year since then, the office of the Minister responsible for Crown corporations has told us to apply for it under FIPPA. We would urge the Minister to release the document without the public having to go through the tiresome process of applying for it under FIPPA.

In the spirit of openness, there are also a number of documents which we would like to be made routinely available:

- Annual reports with more meaningful detail on programme performance (see "Attributes of Managing and Reporting Results: A Survey of Senior Management" Office of the Auditor General of Manitoba. March 2004)
- Orders-in-Council (Although in the Gazette, they are not readily accessible)
- Spreadsheets on Bills explaining legislative changes, before they go to standing committee
- Budget papers and supplementary information on departmental estimates could be posted on the Government web-site once a Budget is brought down and the estimates tabled.

PCWM Policy

RESOLUTION 99-02 Freedom of Information

RESOLVED that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba urge the Government of Manitoba to ensure that

- public bodies maintain a culture of openness with routine disclosure of public information being the rule, and
- openness (as opposed to confidentiality) clauses are written into all public-private partnership final agreements involving a public body, and be it further

RESOLVED that the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba urge the Government of Manitoba to amend the FIPPA

- to ensure that routine access to information is the rule and exceptions to disclosure in the FIPPA are limited, more specific and provide public interest over-rides and
- to establish an Information and Privacy Commissioner with the power to order the release of information, and
- to treat access to electronic and paper records in the same manner, and
- to expand the public interest fee waiver provision, and
- to release promptly the results of all publicly funded polls and surveys, and
- to expand the environmental approvals public registry to include land use planning and resource allocation activities.

2.4 Mental Health and Vulnerable Persons

General Comment:

There is a general feeling in the community that their (patient's/natural supports/advocates) voices/complaints are not heard by Government and suggestions for improving the mental health system are ignored. Personal experience of several members with the system led them to conclude that there is little or no accountability both fiscally and systemically and no transparency within the mental health system. The public is reluctant to vigorously pursue their complaints for fear of repercussions towards their 'loved' one's care. Stigma remains an issue which can only be addressed through public education and a more open, inclusive system. Family and natural supports must become an integral part of the treatment plan. There must be patient advocates who can help navigate the system.

For the most seriously mentally ill there are three primary concerns to be addressed before any positive outcomes can be achieved, namely; **food, shelter, income**. Also, we have developed over time a medical model which is system centered rather than patient centered. The system must move more quickly, with programs such as PACT (a community mental health model) and put the patient needs first.

Systemically there must be more long term certainty to funding of programs which are proven to enhance the well being of the mentally ill.

Major questions requiring attention are:

Access to the following:

a) Treatment:

- To all services and in particular early intervention through school counselors, general practitioners and psychiatrists. There is a need for medical coverage of therapists and psychologists as partners in the treatment plan.

b) Crisis Intervention (must be publicly advertised):

- Crisis Unit and emergency care at the hospitals. Too many patients report they have been turned away from crisis intervention without alternative support services in place.

c) Community Support Services:

- Mentoring/advocacy available to provide support for the mentally ill and their natural supports in navigating through the maze of the mental health system; and then provide on going community support services for outpatient in the areas of housing assistance, financial assistance, counseling, social supports, etc.

d) Welfare/Disability

- Adequate welfare and disability allowance is critical to achieve the maximum level of recovery for the mentally ill. The stress/anxiety caused due to the deprivation of the basics of life, namely: food, shelter and income can only compromise the health of the mentally ill and their families. Due to the lack of income the mentally ill are systemically ghettoized.

Need to educate public on mental health/mental health issues and much more on prevention.

PCWM Policy

01-01 Revisions Of Legislation Affecting Individuals With Mental Illness, Physical Or Mental Disability Or Frailties Resulting From The Ageing Process To Ensure Comprehensive And Appropriate Care And Trusteeship

01-01 RESOLVED that the Provincial Council of Manitoba recommend to the Government of Manitoba a revision of the Mental Health Act to ensure that mentally ill persons receive:

- safeguards to ensure appropriate input into decision-making about an individual by a minimum of 6 to include:

1. the individual;
2. an advocate, if possible chosen by the individual, who may be a family member;
3. any social worker who may be involved;
4. a representative from an individual's support group; and

a minimum of two relevant professionals; - periodic reassessment of decisions;

- access to appropriate appeal procedures;

- planned progress over time towards entitlement of the individual to needed care

and supervision, based on individual plans which maximize autonomy and supports consistent with the needs of the individual and minimize the imposition of protective services;

RESOLVED that the Vulnerable Persons Act be revised to cover all vulnerable persons, specifically persons with mental and/or physical disabilities, to include frail seniors not suffering from a mental illness but from some impairment of their mental and physical faculties, and that the revised Act ensure that all vulnerable persons receive:

- safeguards to ensure appropriate input into decision-making about an individual by a minimum of 6 to include:

1. the individual;
2. an advocate, if possible chosen by the individual, who may be a family member;
3. any social worker who may be involved;
4. a representative from an individual's support group; and
5. a minimum of two relevant professional opinions;

- periodic reassessment of decisions;

- access to appropriate appeal procedures;

- planned progress over time towards entitlement of the individual to needed care

and supervision, based on individual plans which maximize autonomy and support consistent with the needs of the individual and minimize the imposition of protective services.

RESOLVED that the Public Trustee Act be amended to provide for:

- more flexible and partial arrangements for supervision and control consistent with the current needs of the individual;

- periodic reassessment with the goal of maximizing personal autonomy and needed supports while minimizing the need for protective services; and

- a formal appeal procedure.

3. CURRENT CONCERNS – NCWC POLICY

3.1 Economic Gender Equality Indicators And Gender Analysis

We are pleased that the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council has moved to a new office which provides a more spacious and a healthier work environment.

PCWM notes that the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council and the Manitoba Women's Directorate now come under the Manitoba Department of Labour and Immigration. We were disappointed to observe in departmental estimates that the budget of the Women's Directorate has been reduced from \$742,100 (2004/05) to \$683,400 (2005/06). The work of the Directorate in promoting the integration of women's concerns into public policy, legislation and programs must be supported by Government in order to help women achieve equality. Although we can appreciate the value of better alignment of

the department within the new structure, possibly the salary dollars could have been used to provide research or policy work for the Women's Directorate and the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council providing the gender lens, needed to assist the government.

- **Background:** The Province of Manitoba was represented at the Beijing Conference in 1995 (one of the only provinces to be there). It was during that conference that the federal government adopted a policy requiring federal departments and agencies to conduct gender-based analysis. The Province of Manitoba has made some commitment to do the same, but GBA does not appear to generally be done, nor even understood;
- Government policies and programs have different impacts on men and women because of their different life situations. Within the category of women, different categories of women (e.g. women with disabilities, aboriginal women, women of colour, women in rural or remote communities) are also affected differently.
- Advancement of women towards greater equality requires that policies and programs developed and funded by government should be designed with women's different realities in mind and increased equality between women and men as the goal.
- Because much of women's contribution to society results from their primary role in reproduction, their historical responsibilities as prime care takers of children, of older people, and of family members with disabilities or in poor health, their work is largely unremunerated.
- While there have been some advances made for women in the paid workforce (e.g. through tax relief, direct subsidies and training opportunities), these do not compensate for time spent in unpaid labour, foregone income while remaining at home, and persistent gender gaps in wages and access to higher paying employment.
- A potent mechanism for addressing these issues in a systematic way is gender based budgeting by Government's central financial decision-making organ, the Treasury Board
- Good data is essential for such a process to be successful. Since statistics are not always disaggregated by gender, a major thrust to promote such disaggregation is necessary. Women's groups also need ready access to such data in affordable and user friendly format.
- Presentations of data on women are usually made as direct comparisons with data for men. While this may be appropriate in some circumstances, in many others, it hides the specific constraints women face. It also tends to emphasize an adversarial rather than a cooperative framework.
- The gathering of statistics during the recent Health Assessment by RHAs did include a breakdown by gender.

- **Future Directions:** A research paper on trends in and impacts of a decade of federal budgets, in order to assess progress towards gender equality since the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, was commissioned by FAFIA (Feminist Alliance for International Advancement of Women) . FAFIA is a dynamic coalition of over 50 Canadian women’s equality-seeking and related organizations. FAFIA’s mandate is to further women’s equality in Canada through domestic implementation of its’ international human rights commitments. This review reveals several trends that have affected women negatively more than men, particularly because of their greater reliance on social services.
- At the provincial level, several women’s groups are working to promote gender based analysis throughout the provincial budgeting process. UNPAC (United Nations Platform for Action Committee), a federate member of PCWM, has initiated a Gender Budget Project. A previous UNPAC project to promote women’s economic literacy at local, national and global levels (video citing women’s knowledge of and experience in the economy, an interactive website and two resource books) was completed in 2003. The goals of their current project are: to demystify the provincial budget for women throughout Manitoba through outreach and popular education, to involve more Manitoba women in the provincial budgeting process, and to work with Treasury Board to secure a systemic adoption of the GBA process, including training of relevant government officials.
- A Report recently released (April 2005) by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Status of Women, “Gender: Based Analysis: Building Blocks for Success” gives 7 enabling factors for gender-based analysis, which we would like to bring to your attention:
 - I. availability of data which allows for a gender analysis;
 - II. incorporating gender equality at all levels and in all types of activities, from policy formulation and dialogue through to program design and project planning, implementation, and assessment;
 - III. making room for voluntary sector input;
 - IV. having organizational structures, procedures, and norms that promote gender equality;
 - V. commitment of staff at all levels;
 - VI. the allocation of adequate resources, both human and financial;
 - VII. the implementation of accountability mechanisms.

The following is the text of the **1998 NCWC Policy**

98.1EM Economic Gender Equality Indicators And Gender Analysis

- RESOLVED, that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to ensure that:
- a) Statistics Canada and other government departments consult widely with diverse women's groups about the types of data collected; and
 - b) gender sensitivity training be conducted for bureaucrats and politicians, and resources be allocated by the federal government for such training; and
 - c) data be disaggregated by gender wherever possible; and
 - d) data be made accessible without charge to women's and other community groups; and
 - e) funding be provided for capacity building of organizations to ensure a strong voice for women, and that the government partner with such organizations to provide public information, which emphasizes women's distinct contribution and needs rather than the inequities between men and women; and be it further

Cont'd.
RESOLVED,

that the National Council of Women urge the Government of Canada to pass enabling legislation to ensure that gender analysis is applied throughout the government in relation to all laws, policies and programmes, and that the reports on such gender analysis be made widely available to the general public.

3.2 Protection Of Human Rights Of Aboriginal Peoples In Canada

Over the years, PCWM and Aboriginal women have worked together on issues critical to Aboriginal women.

In 2001, we listened carefully when a women's group from Dakota Tipi First Nation (DTFN) spoke about the difficulties they were experiencing with a hereditary chief, aboriginal policing, alleged misappropriation of government funding and gambling profits. As an organization, PCWM cannot speak for aboriginal women but we decided that it was within our mandate to assist them, when asked to do so, on matters of human rights, physical violence and democracy.

Since then, we and others have supported the DTFN women's group in its efforts to have an election on reserve (October 28, 2002); to present to a Standing Committee of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly on July 22, 2002 against the extension of aboriginal policing on reserves in Manitoba (the Attorney General did not proceed with the Bill but, two days later, three members of the delegation were jailed overnight in Portage la Prairie by the Dakota Ojibway Police Service); and to have the Auditor General of Manitoba investigate gambling on the reserve (Dakota Tipi First Nation Gaming Commission and First Nation Gaming Accountability in Manitoba, Office of the Auditor General of Manitoba, March 2003).

The women from DTFN deserve a great deal of respect for the perseverance they have shown in making improvements in their community. They deserve recognition for their role in taking some positive action on policing and accountability for gambling revenues on reserve. Their efforts have come at considerable personal costs in some cases.

On **human rights**, National Council of Women of Canada passed a resolution, *Protection of Human Rights of all Canadians through Standard Federal, Provincial and Territorial Human Rights Codes (2004)*. The Canadian Human Rights Act (1985) specifically excludes Aboriginal peoples. This happened for valid reasons twenty years ago. Now, we urge the Government of Manitoba to work with the federal and other governments to include in their human rights codes those human rights and freedoms set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to ensure that human rights are extended to all Canadians.

On **democracy**, both National Council and PCWM spoke at House of Commons of Canada Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs to the First Nations Governance Act. Although the Bill did not proceed, from what we have heard from women on reserve, it is extremely important that capacity for self-governance and particularly openness and accountability are strengthened. Also, gender equality must be integrated within the existing and new structures that evolve.

PCWM was also invited by the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights to address the issue of matrimonial property rights on reserve in the event of the breakdown of a marriage or common law relationship (September 22, 2003). It is difficult for aboriginal women, especially on remote reserves, to gain access to Legal Aid which is a provincial responsibility. Our Brief and the transcript of the hearings can be viewed on the committee's Senate of Canada web-site.

On **physical violence**, Mothers of Red Nations (MORN) and PCWM are supporting an aboriginal woman who is following up on a spousal abuse case with the Crown Attorney's office. The case was heard in Court of Queen's Bench in Portage la Prairie on October 18 and 19, 2004. The accused was acquitted on seven spousal abuse charges. The defendant has many questions about the way in which her case was managed.

The quality of life for people living on reserves in Manitoba could be considerably improved if much more attentions were paid by governments to the voices of aboriginal women who actually live on reserve.

NCWC Policies

02.4 EM Protection Of Human Rights Of Aboriginal Peoples In Canada

RESOLVED that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to remove section 67 of the Canadian Human Rights Act as quickly as possible and to draft an Aboriginal Human Rights Code in consultation with First Nations governments in compliance with the UN Human Rights Conventions.

NCWC Policies

04.04 Implementation Of All United Nations Human Rights Conventions Ratified By Canada

RESOLVED that the National Council of Women of Canada adopt as policy:

- a) support for speedier implementation of all the Human Rights Conventions and Declarations that have been signed and ratified by Canada; (Convention of Political and Civil Rights, Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women and Convention on the Rights of the Child); and
- b) inclusion of all the same grounds for discrimination as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ((race, colour, sex, language, religion, sexual orientation, age, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, without distinction as to political, jurisdictional or international status) in all its legislation and policy, particularly that covering the Canadian Human Rights Commission; and RESOLVED that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to
 - a) give urgency and primacy to legislation and policies that protect and promote all human rights Canada has endorsed through ratification of United Nations Human Rights Declarations and Conventions; (Convention of Political and Civil Rights, Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women and Convention on the Rights of the Child);and
 - b) include in that legislation and in those policies, particularly in that covering the Canadian Human Rights Commission, all of the same grounds for discrimination listed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (race, colour, sex, language, religion, sexual orientation, age, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, without distinction as to political, jurisdictional or international status); and be it further

Cont'd.

RESOLVED that all Provincial, Territorial and Local Councils of women give the same recommendations to their respective governments with regard to their human rights codes; and be it further RESOLVED that the National Council of Women of Canada coordinate with other human rights/equality-seeking organizations in their efforts to secure all human rights for all Canadians.

3.3 Affordable Housing & Homelessness

Background

Women are more likely to live in poverty, and therefore are more likely to have difficulties finding affordable, adequate and suitable housing to meet their needs and the needs of their families.

Women's gender roles leave them responsible for childcare and domestic work and this affects women's abilities to afford suitable housing. Aboriginal and visible minority women face additional challenges. They speak of personal and collective experiences of oppression and the subsequent difficulties they have finding and affording suitable housing. Elder women, young women, women with disabilities and single mothers are also over-represented among people living in inadequate housing that does not meet their needs.

Women have had an increasingly difficult time finding and maintaining affording suitable housing. This can be traced to changes in housing policy in Canada during the last fifteen years as the federal government withdrew from social housing policy and programs. Women are often homeless even if they are not necessarily on the street and stay in unhealthy environments because of the lack of safe affordable housing.

Recent studies supported by The Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence and the Women's Health Clinic have found:

- Safety is the number one concern for women when they look for housing
- Women experience sexual harassment from landlords
- Frequently Health and Safety standards are not followed in low-income apartments
- Women have not often had the chance to learn how to do basic home maintenance and seldom own a suitable set of tools
- Social assistance does not allocate a budget for a telephone, and does not consider this a basic need, therefore women allocate money from their food budgets to pay for a phone
- The waiting list for subsidized housing provided by the Manitoba Housing Authority has increased by 93% in the past 3 years
- The lack of affordable housing forces women and their families to live in shelters or in inappropriate settings (i.e. 3 children and mother in bachelor suite)
- 44% of women we spoke to living in private market housing had moved in the past 6 months
- None of the women living in co-op housing we spoke to had moved in the past 6 months
- Studies have found that co-op housing costs less per unit to subsidize than social housing because of the participation of residents in administration.

PCWM supports the Recommendations from the Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence (PWHCE) stated in a "Women, Poverty and Housing Fact Sheet" by Molly McCracken (PWCHE), and Gail Watson, Women's Health Clinic (2003).

Recommendations include:

- Support the establishment of stable, longer-term low-cost housing for women and their children to reduce multiple displacements. Solutions must adopt a grassroots approach that includes extensive consultations with women. Policy approaches must meaningfully include the women who are affected.
- Housing policies must recognize that women have particular challenges in the housing market – especially in accessing and sustaining decent housing – and often require additional support in finding and financing suitable housing.
- Provide training in gender-based analysis to housing professionals and policy makers to ensure policies and practices are gender sensitive.

On November 15, 2003 PCWM held a Workshop at the Salvation Army Weetamah Church, "A House is Not a Home: The Impact of Housing and Homelessness on the Lives of Women". Four study groups offered suggestions on how to make our concerns become actions. The areas are as follows (the full report is available from PCWM)

1. Overview of housing for women
2. Housing for women who are experiencing violence at home
3. Seniors
4. Urban housing for women

Issues related to First Nations Women and Housing:

Presentation by Keely Ten Fingers, Research & Policy Development Unit , Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

For Consideration:

- Need for clear understanding of housing issues facing First Nations (FN) women in the contexts of on/off reserve.
- Housing issues experienced by FN women on reserve must be addressed within the context of gender equality rights (dealing with the Indian Act).
- Increased and sustained funding of on reserve housing, especially more development to address overcrowding.
- Increased /improved communications efforts targeting FN's moving from reserves to urban centres.
- Transitional housing in Winnipeg (and other urban centres in the province)
- Off reserve housing policies must target single parents, especially single mothers.

NCWC Policies

02.2 PU Affordable Housing

RESOLVED that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to:

- a) establish and implement a strong social housing policy that will ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing;
- b) keep the needs of the homeless in mind in the development of social services and housing policies.

99.4 Homelessness

RESOLVED, That the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) urge the Government of Canada to recognize that homelessness is reaching disaster proportions in Canada and to fulfill its responsibilities to provide affordable housing; and be it further

RESOLVED, That NCWC urge its Provincial Councils of Women to urge their respective provincial governments to recognize that homelessness is reaching disastrous proportions on Canada and seek ways to address the problem; and be it further

RESOLVED, That NCWC urge its Local Councils of Women to urge their respective municipal governments to cooperate with the federal and provincial governments to facilitate the conversion of suitable buildings into hostels and shelters and provide medical support services and counseling.

3. 4 Health

General Comments

Health is much more than the delivery of health services. The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba commends the Government for supporting the principles of the Canada Health Act and we recognize the challenges of managing a public health care system, plus investing in a wellness system that keeps people healthy. The decision to legislate “no smoking” throughout the province is strongly supported. The work towards setting up the midwifery program needs to be continued and extended. Reproductive health services, such as provided by the new community based centre administered by the Women’s Health Clinic is a welcome addition for women in this province that the Provincial Council supports.

We have concerns regarding the recent announcements for appointments to the board of the WRHA. Five women completed their time on the Board, including the Chair, but only one woman was appointed, and four men. This leaves only 3 women on a board of 12, and both the Chair and Vice Chair are male. It is shocking to note that as of April 1st, 2005, there were no aboriginal people on the WRHA Board. (note – Congratulations on the recent appointment of Belinda VandenBroeck!)

We also have concerns regarding the current status of midwifery in the Province. Although we recognize the progress that has been made, most Manitoba women cannot yet get midwifery care and the profession cannot grow without established education and training programs. The education programs in Ontario and BC have a priority of taking students from their own provinces first. The training for midwives for First Nation's communities (AMEP) is a good first step, but should be expanded to include appropriate training for new recruits, as well as refresher and upgrading programs for those with foreign training. This can go a long way to relieve the impending maternity care crisis..

The following three sections are on specific Policy that have been approved by the National Council of Women of Canada, and are brought forward for your information.

3.4.1 Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder

Background

- It is now well-recognized that Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE) may result from the use of alcoholic beverages by women during pregnancy.
- Children with FAS do not do well in school, may drop out early and drift into drug and alcohol abuse, crime and homelessness despite special education, possibly including private schooling and a series of counsellors, psychologists and psychiatrist.
- Doctors and other health care professionals often do not recognize FAS and FAE and therefore may misdiagnose it.
- Many women are not aware of the dangers of drinking alcohol while pregnant.
- The integrated approach with the Healthy Child Manitoba initiative (Aboriginal and Northern Affairs; Health; Culture, Heritage and Tourism; Education, Citizenship and Youth; Healthy Living; Status of Women; and Justice). We are pleased to see that the prevention of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and support of individuals already affected is one of the core commitments of Healthy Child Manitoba. Work is focussed on a comprehensive and culturally sensitive plan for prevention, intervention, and support.

Recommendations

- Continue with public education programs and the integration of policy and program delivery, plus consultation with affected communities, particularly women;
- Understanding that alcohol consumption may be an indicator of the poverty and life situation for many women in this province is important and addressing the root cause (poverty/social situation) is a key factor in addressing this health issue.

NCWC Policy

03.1 UP: Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

RESOLVED that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada, the Provinces and the Territories to:

- a) undertake a campaign to make men and women aware of the dangers of drinking alcoholic beverages during pregnancy;
- b) develop improved diagnostic techniques that will help doctors and other health care professionals better recognize and diagnose FAS and FAE;
- c) require distributors of alcoholic beverages , including wine, to attach a warning label to their products indicating the dangers of drinking when pregnant;
- d) assist in providing services required by those affected with FAS and FAE; and
- e) strengthen the provision of public information on the dangers of alcohol consumption by pregnant women ; and be it further

RESOLVED that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to address Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Effect as a Public Health Crisis, and address treatment of alcohol abuse in women of child-bearing age.

3.4.2 Women And HIV/AIDS

Background

- In 1992, The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) urged the Government of Canada to: Increase research, particularly into symptoms of HIV infection and AIDS in women; and allow women access to clinical trials; and ensure that women have equal access to treatment for HIV infection and for AIDS;
- In 1999, women in Canada account for the largest percentage increase of new cases of HIV;
- Women do not see themselves as being at risk of HIV / AIDS due to the myths and stereotypes surrounding the disease;
- The medical and social needs of HIV positive women and those with AIDS are not properly addressed by healthcare and/or other professional services; and
- HIV and AIDS affect men and women differently, physically, mentally, socially, and economically;
- Women are under-diagnosed with HIV and AIDS due to physicians' perceptions and inability to recognize the symptoms in women;
- Women with HIV and AIDS still have unequal access to clinical trials and treatment.
- There have been approximately 945 cases of HIV/AIDS diagnosed cases in Manitoba from 1985 to 2004, with a growing percentage of women, and a growing number outside of Winnipeg. 41% of new cases in Manitoba between January to June 2002 were aboriginal.

Comments

- Approval of the drug Kaletra, in December 2002, although one of the last provinces to do so.
- There is a provincial STD strategy (August 2001)

Recommendations

- The report "As Long as the Waters Flow", (A Component of Manitoba's Provincial AIDS Strategy, October 2004) presents a strong case to support programs targeting aboriginal Youth. The majority of new HIV cases for Aboriginal Manitobans list injection drug use as their most likely exposure to HIV.
- Statistics demonstrate an increase in HIV infections among women. From 1985 to 1996, only 61 of the 574 Manitobans diagnosed with HIV were female. Between 1997 and 2002, 129 of the 412 similarly diagnosed Manitobans were female. The risk is highest for Aboriginal females. Between 1997 and 2002, the average rate of infection for Manitoba women self-reporting as Aboriginal was 53 per 100,000, while the rate for all other women was 3.5 per 100,000.
- The fact that the vast majority of the self-identified Aboriginal women testing positive for HIV in Manitoba are of childbearing age is a matter of particular concern. It is important that the necessary drugs be available and provided to protect the unborn child from being born with HIV/AIDS.
- Implementing the strategic goals that are in the report, namely: prevention and education; care, treatment and support; co-ordination of services; and research and evaluation.

NCWC Policy

99.3 UP: Women And HIV/AIDS

RESOLVED, that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) urge the Government of Canada to:

1. Increase funds for, and make a priority, HIV/AIDS programs that address the needs of HIV positive women, women with AIDS, and women at risk of infection; and
 2. Develop new HIV/AIDS prevention and education programs for the public, designed specifically to address the needs of women; and
- Develop educational programs for physicians, healthcare workers and other professionals in the community to identify and support women with HIV/AIDS and those at risk of infection; and be it further

RESOLVED, that NCWC request Provincial Councils of Women and where appropriate, Local Councils of Women to urge their respective provincial governments to:

- Expand their programs for HIV/AIDS to include the preteen population, new HIV/AIDS prevention, education and training programs specifically designed to meet the needs of women, with a focus on mothers; and
- Develop educational programs for physicians, healthcare workers and professionals in the community; and
- Support the women with HIV/AIDS and those at risk of infection, which are often their children, through counselling and financial help.

3. 4.3 Addressing Language Barriers

Background

- There is increasing evidence that those who do not speak one of the official languages do not have equitable access to health information and services in Canada.
- There is compelling evidence that quality of care for those who are not fluent in an official language is affected as a result of miscommunication, misdiagnosis, inappropriate treatment, poor understanding of prescribed treatment, with the result that there may be lower patient satisfaction.
- Equitable quality of care is also affected through failure of health care providers to meet ethical standards as exemplified through failure to provide care to the same standard as received by other patients, failure to protect patient confidentiality, and failure to adequately ensure patient's informed consent to treatment.
- Failure to address language barriers results in exclusion of those who do not speak one of Canada's official languages from many clinical and health services research.
- Health is a provincial and territorial responsibility, and in order to receive federal funding, those governments must comply with standards established by and overseen by Health Canada.
- The Canada Health Act states that its primary objective is to facilitate reasonable access to health services without financial or other barriers.
- Rights to language access for services in health care in Canada are principally based on interpretations of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act, provincial and territorial Human

Rights Codes, the Canada Health Act, Provincial Health Acts and the Criminal Code of Canada.

- Research on access to health care in Canada has neglected the impact of non-financial barriers (such as gender and language barriers) to equitable access.
- Differences in utilization of preventive services have been attributed to cultural beliefs and practices, rather than on characteristics of the health care system itself.
- Rights to language access differ among various constituencies in Canada. The absence of legislation specifically requiring that health interpreters be provided in the health care setting has contributed to the failure of the health care system to take responsibility for provision of such services.

Comments

- PCWM acknowledges the work of Dr. Sarah Bowen who has done a great deal of work in the area of analysing the evidence of the impacts of language barriers on health, health care access and quality of care (Language Barrier in the WRHA: Evidence and Implications, September 2004). The published research indicates clearly that failure to address language barrier is associated with greater risks of misdiagnosis, poorer patient understanding of their health condition, failure to protect privacy and confidentiality and the increased use of costly services such as diagnostic testing and hospital admissions.

Recommendations

- Provide the necessary resources, and coordinate with existing community resources to provide the language supports necessary within the health care system. Work with other provincial and national groups and organizations to establish training courses, and set standards.

NCWC Policy

02.9 Access To Health Care - Addressing Language Barriers

RESOLVED that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to work with the provincial and territorial governments to:

- a. develop national standards and encourage their implementation, in order to improve oral, written and sign language access to health information and services for those who lack official language proficiency;
- b. coordinate a national research strategy to further the understanding of the effect of language barriers on health service utilization and the health status of Canadians; and in particular, ensure that such research explores the impact on women;
- c. develop initiatives to promote awareness of the importance of provider/patient communication and the provision of health interpretation within health professions and institutions.

3.5 Helping Foreign-Trained Health Care Professionals Access Accreditation

Background

Low-income trends among the population as a whole tend to mask an underlying divide that has opened up between the Canadian-born and immigrants to Canada. (see

Income Inequality and Low Income in Canada: An International Perspective, Statistics Canada)

- The decline in earnings among successive groups of immigrants entering Canada through the 1980s and 1990s has been well documented. In 1980, the earnings of recent male immigrants working full-time, full-year were 84% of comparable Canadian-born workers. By 2000, recent male immigrants were earning only 60% of their Canadian-born counterparts, and similar patterns are observed for women.
- Recent immigrants were much more highly educated in 2000 (43% had university degrees) than in 1980 (when 19% had degrees)
- However, a university degree offered no protection against the general trend. While low-income rates are lower among the university-educated, the rate of increase in low-income levels was actually higher among the better educated.
- Controlling for differences, low-income rates rose 24% among immigrants with less than a high school education but 66% among those with university degrees.

NCWC Policy

5. 03.3 Helping Foreign-Trained Health Care Professionals Access Accreditation

RESOLVED that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to work with the provincial governments, professional organizations and licensing bodies to make accreditation more accessible for foreign-trained professionals, while ensuring that a uniform standard of competence is maintained across Canada by:

- a) ensuring loans and other resources are available for qualifying examinations and upgrading;
- b) developing academic assessment tools and testing;
- c) ensure re-testing is accessible and affordable;
- d) increasing the opportunities for foreign-trained professionals to acquire more Canadian experience under supervision; and
- e) accelerating the accreditation and retraining process through English and French language training, including long term and/or immersion language training where necessary.

3.6 Protecting Family Law

At the National Council of Women of Canada's Annual Meeting in 2004, the use of Sharia Law in the arbitration of family disputes, using religious leaders, rather than judges from the Courts was brought forward as an Emerging Issue, and the following Resolution was passed, urging Provincial Governments to ensure that no alternative systems for resolving family law disputes be allowed to compromise the rights of women and children as they presently exist in federal, Provincial and territorial Law.

Recently, there has been considerable media coverage regarding this matter.

September 8 was a day of demonstration in many Cities in Canada and Europe protesting the use of religious law in family courts, after which it was reported that the Ontario Government has reversed its previous decision to allow this use of the arbitration process.

We urge the Manitoba Government to disallow this as well for the reasons described in the Resolution. We note that many Muslim women and groups have taken this position and we support their concern that under Muslim law, in particular, women's equality is not protected, and to allow binding arbitration to supercede secular family laws in

Canada undermines hard won equality rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

NCWC Policy

RESOLVED that National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) urge all Provincial Councils of Women to urge their respective governments to:

- a) respect equality for women embedded in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);
- b) reject any form of binding arbitration in Family Law;
- c) ensure that no alternative systems for resolving family law disputes be allowed to compromise the rights of women and children as they presently exist in federal, Provincial and territorial Law;
- d) investigate and implement ways to save court time and costs without compromising the rights of women and children

3.7 Additions to the PCWM Brief as a result of NCWC AGM 2005

3.7.1 Defined Benefits Pension Plan

We are concerned about adequate protection for employees under Defined Benefits Pension Plans. A study carried out by the Certified General Accountants' Association of Canada asserts that almost 60% of such plans are in a deficit position. We would urge the Government of Manitoba to take measures to protect these plans and make them sustainable.

3.7.2 Public-Private Partnerships

We are concerned that Public-Private Partnerships (P3) are increasingly being funded by all levels of government in the areas of health, environment and education. Independent studies repeatedly demonstrate that P3s are more costly and less effective. What is the stand of the Manitoba Government on P3s, particularly in these three areas?

APPENDIX

Highlights of PCWM Activities

September 2001 - April 2005

September 13, 2001 - met with the New Democratic Party caucus.

November 2, 2001 - took part in a design charrette for the Kapyong Barracks site as part of World Town Planning Day.

November 17, 2001 - "Securing Our Future: Economic Security for Women" semi-annual meeting at Balmoral Hall School.

April 27, 2002 - "Women and First Nations' Governance" was the topic of a speech by David G. Newman Q.C. at the 53rd Annual General Meeting in Selkirk, Manitoba.

May 9-11, 2002 - co-sponsored a national conference, "Open and Controlled Society: Access to Government and Corporate Information" at the University of Winnipeg.

June 26, 2002 - presented objections to Plan Winnipeg Amendment to redesignate lands on north side of TransCanada Highway (Portage Avenue) from West Pointe auto mall to western city limit for commercial development based on traffic safety and Manitoba Highways Protection Act.

October 15, 2002 - organized an all-candidate, City of Winnipeg Mayorality Forum, "Charting Our Future", in conjunction with Council of Women of Winnipeg.

November 16, 2002 - "Incontinence Health Issues Workshop" at PCWM Semi-Annual Meeting held at the Riverview Health Centre, Winnipeg.

December 20, 2002 - presented to the Manitoba Gaming Control Commission regarding the need for more open and accountable reporting practices for gambling revenues and the role of the Commission in Manitoba gaming activities.

March 19, 2003 - National and Provincial Councils both presented Briefs to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, Northern Development and Natural Resources regarding Bill C-7, First Nations Governance Act.

April 14, 2003- participated in Manitoba Municipal Board hearing re PCWM's objections to a Plan Winnipeg amendment. (see June 26, 2002)

April 30 - May 3, 2003 - participated in a Design Charrette for Waverley West organized by the Faculty of Architecture, University of Manitoba, for the Government of Manitoba.

May 15th, 2003 – PCWM 54th AGM. Held at Aikins House, with a presentation by Dr. Sarah Bowen.

May 26, 2003 - PCWM Bearpit Session: "Covering the Province: The Media in a Democracy", addressing the role of the media in the Provincial election of June 2003.

September 22, 2003 - invited to speak before the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights in Ottawa on the subject of "On-Reserve Matrimonial Real Property on the Breakdown of a Marriage or Common Law Relationship and the Policy Context in Which They are Situated".

October 8, 2003 - (Un)Just Income: Passport to Poverty - a PCWM public forum as part of a week long series of events planned by the Just Income Coalition to bring awareness of the need to raise the minimum wage to a living level followed by annual indexing.

November 15, 2003 - "A House is Not a Home: The Impact of Housing and Homelessness on the Lives of Women" Workshop at the PCWM Semi-Annual Meeting, held at the Salvation Army Weetamah Church.

December 5, 2003 - "Coming Together: Dialogue for Change" at the Kekinaw Centre meeting with Aboriginal women from both urban and reserve communities.

June 7, 2004 - presented on Bill 10, Gaming Control Amendment Act, at a standing committee of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly.

January 14, 2004 - Members of PCWM met with Leanne Rowat MLA for Minnedosa, Conservative critic for Status of Women and Housing

January 27, 2004 - met with Manitoba Gaming Control Commission as part of the Commission's strategic planning exercise.

February 10, 2004 - PCWM and CWW members met with Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, MaryAnn Mihychuk, to discuss Plan Winnipeg, Capital Region and Waverley West.

February 17 & 18, 2004 - "Women's Social Justice Forum" organized by federal government agencies to discuss issues such as Women and the Law, Women in Jail, Addictions, Seniors, Aboriginal Women On and Off Reserve.

April 1, 2004 - April Fool's Day Gender Based Budget Forum - pre budget consultations sponsored by UNPAC.

May 14 & 15, 2004 - "Reaching Out: Women Working Together" Workshop and 55th Annual General Meeting. Topics: Affordable Housing, Agriculture, Aboriginal Issues and Domestic Violence, held in Brandon, Manitoba. "Celebrating Brandon Women" Recognition Reception at Brandon City Hall.

June 14, 2004 - Round Table Discussion and Sharing Session on Violence Prevention: Programs and Services for Girls and Young Women. sponsored by Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

June 15, 2004 - organized an all-candidate, City of Winnipeg Mayoralty Forum in conjunction with Council of Women of Winnipeg.

September 16, 2004 - Guest Speaker Her Honour Lenore Berscheid discussing Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

October 16, 2004 – Incontinence workshop held in Beausejour in cooperation with the North Eastman Health Association.

October 28, 2004 - "An Evening with Hon. Robert Nault" - former Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development spoke on the issues of modern governance for First Nations

November 20, 2004 - "Taking Chances on the Future - Gambling in Manitoba" presentation, panel and workshops at Semi-Annual Meeting, held at Westminster Church.

November 25, 2004 - Round Table Discussion and Resource Sharing Session on Violence Prevention sponsored by the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

January 4 & 5, 2005 - members of PCWM and CWW presented at Winnipeg City Council Executive Policy Committee Hearings on Waverley West – Plan Winnipeg amendment.

February 18, 2005 - PCWM and CWW as well as Child Find Manitoba, Soroptimist International of Winnipeg, and UNIFEM worked with Beyond Borders to organize a Round Table and luncheon on "Child Brides in Canada! Can it Be True". The day included a moderated discussion on Bill C-2 and on child exploitation in polygamous communities.

February, March, April, May - PCWM members attended meetings of "Follow the Money Coalition", a coalition developing around the issue of gender budgets.

April 7 2005 - supported the launch by MAISEY (Media Awareness Initiative about Sexually Exploited Youth) of their new campaign to educate the media regarding language.

April 21, 2005 - participated as a member of the Employment Equity Advisory Committee, organized by Manitoba Hydro, to support the construction of Hydro's new building in Winnipeg.

April 26, 2005 - met with Anita Neville, MP, Chair of the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women to discuss the Committee's report, "Gender-Based Analysis: Building Blocks for Success".

April 28, 2005 - "Patience and Fortitude" was the topic of a speech by Madam Justice Karen Simonsen at the 56th Annual General Meeting.

May 2-17, 2005 - supported the Just Income Coalition Low Income Inquiry as a member of the organizing committee.

July 7th – August 2nd, 2005 – sponsored jointly with the Council of Women of Winnipeg the very successful Art Display "Celebrating Women" - This is a national touring art exhibition honouring the passion, pride and perseverance of Canadian Women. The exhibit features the artwork of Canadian artist Larisa Sembaliuk Cheladyn and is a dynamic statement about the impact women have had on Canadian history.