



October 13, 2011

Hon. Dalton McGuinty, MPP, Premier of Ontario
Room 281, Main Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A1
dmcguinty.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

Dear Premier McGuinty,

Re: Costs of the Safe Streets and Communities Act, Bill C-10, to Provinces and Territories

I am writing you today on behalf of the Ontario Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) to seek your support in calling on the Government of Canada to defer the *Safe Streets and Communities Act, Bill C-10*. Our national organization has policy related to justice issues and is concerned that the proposed federal legislation will have a significant impact on the province in a number of critical ways. These include: imposing major financial costs, putting extreme pressure on system capacity, and increasing requirements for provision of services.

Our national CFUW, as well as ourselves, are concerned that the Government of Canada has yet to disclose information about the costs of the various elements of the Act, necessary information for parliamentarians, the provinces, territories and the public. The Parliamentary Budget Officer has projected the increase costs related to just one of the bills would be more than five billion dollars – more than doubling current expenditures for the corrections system alone. Furthermore, he revealed that the provinces and territories would have to contribute the largest proportion of that increase.¹

As well, Bill C-10, in part, calls for more mandatory sentences at a time when the evidence shows that such an approach does not provide better protection for society. Nor does it rehabilitate individuals or generally contribute to the well-being of others. In the U. S., the Supreme Court found that mandatory guidelines for sentencing breached constitutional rights.² This fact, combined with skyrocketing rates of imprisonment of the most dispossessed, has meant that many states are now revisiting their approach.

CFUW also shares the concerns of the Canadian Paediatric Society, the Canadian Bar Association and the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates, that the proposed changes to the Youth Criminal Justice Act under Bill C-10 could create dangerous gaps in services, education, and healthcare for an increased number of incarcerated adolescents. The current Youth Crime Justice Act, which reflects the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, supports rehabilitation and reintegration. The proposed changes contained within the bill threaten to put the emphasis on incarceration.³

¹ Curry, B. \$458-million for one year: with more people in jail, that's the cost of one Tory crime bill. The Globe and Mail, September 28, 2011.

² Blakely v. Washington, 452 U.S. 296 (2004) at 313.

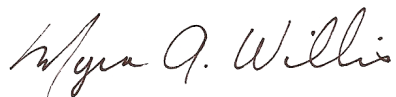
³ Canadian Paediatric Society. Youth Criminal Justice Act Should Not Be Amended as Proposed : Advise Paediatricians. September 20, 2011.

Although this is a federal bill, it will have a major impact on provincial corrections facilities, which are already severely over-crowded.⁴ As a result, national CFUW joined with other organizations such as the Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies and the John Howard Society in urging the federal government not to enact the Safe Streets and Community Act until the provinces, territories and the federal government:

- 1) have a clear understanding of the costs attached to each proposed legislative or policy reform in the bill; and
- 2) can assure Parliament that the expected increase in costs can be accommodated without exceeding 100% capacity of federal and provincial correctional facilities and without increasing our current deficit.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



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c.c. Tim Hudak, Leader of the Opposition tim.hudakco@pc.ola.org
c.c. Andrea Horwath, Leader, NDP ahorwath-co@ndp.on.ca
c.c. Ms. Brenda Wallace, National President, CFUW, Regina, Saskatchewan
c.c. Ms. Robin Jackson, Executive Director, CFUW, Ottawa, Ontario

⁴ Melgrew, I. Judge deems Harper's crime bill strain on system. Vancouver Sun, September 29.