



Comments on the
2009 Ontario Budget

submitted to the

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Room 1405, Whitney Block
Queen's Park, Toronto, ON M7A 1A2

January 16, 2009

By the

Canadian Federation of University Women
Ontario Council

Submitted by
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Pat Hoy, MPP Chatham-Kent-Essex
Chair, Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs,
Room 1405, Whitney Block
Queen's Park, Toronto, ON M7A 1A2
Fax: 416-325-3505

January 16, 2009

Re: Pre-Budget Consultations, 2009

Dear Mr. Hoy and the Members of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs,

The Ontario Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) is composed of 57 clubs comprised of graduates living in urban and rural areas across Ontario. We are non-partisan, non-sectarian and we are totally member funded. Our members are active in public affairs, advocating on public education, justice, health and environmental issues as well as the status of women and human rights. Ontario Council is part of the Canadian Federation of University Women and has links to the International Federation of University Women.

Support for the Poverty Reduction Strategy

Ontario Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women **is very supportive of the Government of Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy report, *Breaking the Cycle*.**

We were very pleased to see that many of our requests over the years have become part of the Strategy, items that we still advocate for such as:

- support for public education
- support for post-secondary education, including technical training
- early learning and child care
- affordable housing
- support to communities and community organizations
- support to parents
- programmes for children, educational, recreational and physical, and
- the recognition of the special needs of abused women, seniors, people with disabilities, aboriginal communities

We are pleased to see the willingness to be accountable to the community by determining straight forward measurements. We can only hope that this openness and determination continues.

Like many other organizations, large and small, we endorsed the 25 in 5 Declaration for poverty reduction, so we were very gratified to see the government's wholehearted support of this.

“...the best tool for breaking the (poverty) cycle is education...the other key components influencing the capacity for kids to reach their potential – adequate housing, good health and sufficient incomes for their families” (*Breaking the Cycle*, pg.35)

Among the many points made by the 25 in 5 Network for Poverty Reduction is the impact of **increasing incomes for vulnerable families**. This money will have an immediate effect. **It will be spent in the local economy** used to purchase necessities locally. “Strengthening the incomes of vulnerable families and adults and investing in housing and child care will reduce poverty, and stimulate demand in local economies across Ontario “¹ – a very important point at this time of severe economic downturn.

One specific suggestion by the 25 in 5 Network included in the Blueprint that should be highlighted is a **\$100/month food supplement** “to alleviate chronic cycles of hunger experienced by adults (and children) on social assistance.”² In one of the consultations, it was suggested that this be sent to people on social assistance mid-month. The Ontario Hunger Report 2008 noted that there had been a 13% increase in food bank users between September 2007 and September 2008³. This problem of hunger will only get worse.

Social infrastructure and job creation

At this time of very serious economic problems, many requests and suggestions are for job creation within the physical infrastructure. While we acknowledge that this is very important, especially affordable housing (its creation and maintenance), the physical infrastructure is not the only infrastructure that could be used for new jobs.

The social infrastructure involving the care of people is of vital importance and ripe for job creation. This could cover all areas of health, education, community and social services.

¹ Novick, Marvyn and Peter Clutterbuck, *Blueprint for Poverty Reduction: Legacy for an Inclusive Ontario*, 25 in 5 Network for Poverty Reduction, Nov.2008, p.7 <http://povertywatchontario.ca/downloads/Blueprint-for-Poverty-Reduction-DRAFT.pdf>

² *ibid.* p.15

³ Spence, Adam, *Ontario Hunger Report 2008, The Leading Edge of the Storm*, Ontario Association of Food Banks, Dec.2008, p.3 <http://www.oafb.ca/assets/pdfs/HungerReport2008.pdf>

Some other areas of specific interest to CFUW Ontario Council:

Child care and early learning

Investing in child care allows parents, especially single parents, to participate in the work force and/or continue their education; in Quebec the \$7.00 a day childcare has reduced child poverty by 50%; early learning assists in school readiness for children.

One concern is the salaries of early childhood educators (ECEs). A survey of the internet brings up salaries for garbage collectors for the City of Toronto in 2007 was \$24.14 while that of an ECE with a minimum of two years post-secondary education was \$24.94.

Support to families

One of the major reports this year is *The Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* by The Honourable Roy McMurtry and Dr. Alvin Curling. Many of its proposals for support revolve around families:

“Families ...are at the core of everything we are proposing...But many families require supports ... (which) must be locally available, culturally relevant and both active and creative in their outreach to the most marginalized.”⁴

A few of their specific proposals:

- Making the prenatal program of Healthy Babies, Healthy Children universally available and better known
- The extension of the Best Start program “fosters full-day learning and development, works actively to ensure that learning problems are noted, diagnosed and addressed at this early stage...”⁵
- The creation of “staffed adventure playgrounds” to draw in children and their parents to parent support centres which many vulnerable parents may be too intimidated to attend.

Support to communities

In our submission last year we talked about the “need to build the capacity to support families by empowering their community. Providing ongoing, stable assistance to community institutions will, in turn, build that capacity needed to support families – whatever shape these families might take”⁶

⁴ McMurtry, The Hon. Roy and Dr. Alvin Curling, *The Review of the Roots of Youth Violence*, 2008, Queen’s Printer for Ontario, p.251, <http://www.rootsofyouthviolence.on.ca/english/index.asp>

⁵ *ibid*, p.253

⁶ CFUW Ontario Council, Presentation to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs Concerning the Pre-Budget Consultations, Jan.30, 2008, p.7 <http://www.cfuwontcouncil.ca/PRE-BUDGET%20BRIEF,%20Jan.30,2008.pdf>

CFUW Ontario Council was pleased to see this recognized in *Roots of Violence* which as they write “some youth, their peer or street community is their only real family.”⁷

We are also pleased to see financial commitments in *Breaking the Cycle* for community supports, especially the \$10 million for the After School Program and \$7 million for the school Community Hub program.

Women and violence

During the spring and summer of 2006, a number of CFUW Ontario Council volunteers interviewed front-line workers in thirty different organizations involved with violence towards women. The volunteers used a questionnaire developed by Dr. Andrea Levan of Laurentian University for CFUW Ontario Council.

The main findings were:

- inadequate funding for a variety of programs as a primary need. These programs include among others child care, housing (especially for women trying to escape abusive relationships), and specialized services (e.g. immigrant, Aboriginal, substance addicted women)
- public awareness. ...Some respondents expressed their sense that public awareness of violence against women seems actually to have decreased in recent years, and funding cutbacks have left agencies without the time or resources to do outreach or public education. ...More programs are needed to focus attitudes and values through the educational and public health systems.
- reliable funding for programs which have proven value⁸

Home Care

There are serious problems with the competition for funds from a system that is not unified results in inappropriate care.

To create an economically viable and sustainable system, the Ontario government must dismantle the vertical levels of care and accountability and realign care to a horizontal model based on patient / client need which would facilitate access to the continuum of health care and address health promotion and disease prevention in an efficient and effective manner.

⁷ *Roots of Violence*, p.253

⁸ Scott, P. and A. John Arrowood, *Report on the Violence Against Women Questionnaire*, Ontario Council Canadian Federation of University Women, June 2008
<http://www.cfuwontouncil.ca/VIOLENCE%20REPORT,%20June%202008.pdf>

Overall accountability should be the responsibility of the LHIN with transparent checks, balances and qualitative/quantitative measurements in place to ensure effectiveness. A well designed system would allow patients who are clinically ready to be discharged from acute care to more appropriate levels of care (e.g. Home with support and Care for the client , Rehabilitation, Long Term Care etc.) to move seamlessly without delay. This would permit the emergency departments, the services of acute hospitals, home care, long-term care facilities, and community support services to deliver on the mandate for which they are funded and equipped.

Two other concerns have been noted by CFUW Ontario Council, which while not directly related to budgetary amounts, do affect the efficiency of the home care system:

Problems with the competitive process:

Home care is the only direct care sector in health care that utilizes competitive bidding. The Canadian Home Care Association has identified health human resources as the number one challenge that provinces face, specifically, the recruitment, ongoing education and retention of trained staff⁹

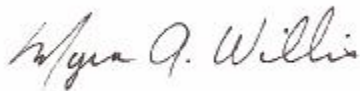
Need for changing role for and accountability of the Community Care Access Centre

The minimum requirement should be system-level case management, a single administrative structure, a single funding envelope, and a range of services appropriate to the care of seniors.

Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs)

CFUW Ontario Council will continue to monitor the growth of the LHINs. The legislation should be due for review during the 2009-2010 period. Considering the amounts of money and the amount of the health infrastructure involved, the LHIN is one of the most fundamental, yet least understood, part of the Ontario health structure.

Respectfully submitted,



Myra Willis
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Canadian Federation of University Women

⁹ Portraits of Home Care in Canada, March 2008, p.xix <http://www.cdnhomecare.ca/media.php?mid=1877>

Appendix A

Canadian Federation of University Women ONTARIO COUNCIL

Policy relating to the Pre-Budget Consultations, 2009

Note: CFUW Ontario Council policy integrates that of CFUW Ontario Council with that of CFUW and IFUW.

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

Child Care and Early Learning CFUW, 1987

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the Government of Canada to commit itself, through social and economic policies, to facilitate the provision of an adequate supply of affordable, accessible child care facilities, which fulfil the purposes of providing a safe, healthy, physical, social, emotional and intellectual development.

Early Childhood Education and Care CFUW, 2006 Revised Resolution (Original Resolution 1994)

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women reaffirm its existing policy and urge the Government of Canada to give priority to the creation of a quality, universally accessible and comprehensive early learning and child care program which emphasizes the development of the whole child. Funding for this initiative should involve all levels of government through cost-sharing mechanisms, as in other human services such as health, education and social programs.

Parenting CFUW, 1979

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge provincial ministries of education and local school boards to establish programs in parenting and human relations for all students, elementary, intermediate, and secondary, such programs to be compulsory in at least the intermediate and elementary grades.

FAMILY LAW

Equality in Family Law CFUW, 2005

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the Government of Canada and all provincial and territorial governments of Canada to exclude family law disputes from arbitration legislation, so that the rights of an individual under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms are respected; and

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the Government of Canada and all

provincial and territorial governments of Canada to ensure that all residents of Canada are made cognizant of their rights and responsibilities under family law legislation and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

HOUSING

Affordable Housing

CFUW, 1992

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urge the Government of Canada to reinstate non-profit, co-operative and affordable housing programs, and to promote and to finance these programs; and

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge all levels of government to co-operate in establishing comprehensive plans for land use, which will guarantee affordable housing within community developments.

Homeless Youth

CFUW, 2006

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the federal, provincial, territorial, regional and municipal governments to formulate and implement gender sensitive plans to address the specific needs of homeless youth, to include:

- 1.a range of housing options
 - Crisis
 - Transitional
 - supportive
 - supported
 - Long-term affordable housing;
2. coordinated and accessible youth support services with focus on education and self-sufficiency; and
3. ongoing financial resources committed to organizations and agencies that provide housing and support services to homeless youth.

POVERTY

Poverty

CFUW, 2000

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the federal government to renew its commitments to the UN regarding poverty; and

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the federal, provincial and territorial governments to:

1. implement measures intended to reduce and prevent poverty, especially child poverty.
2. initiate a careful re-evaluation of the situation regarding the real economic, healthcare and educational needs of Canadian children, as well as the actual public resources available to fight poverty.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Prevention of Violence against Women

CFUW, 1992

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the Federal, provincial and territorial governments to take appropriate steps to improve measures to prevent violence against women.

Wife Assault Victims

CFUW, 1992

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urge its members to promote the use of violence prevention education programs in their communities; and
RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women at all levels of the organization, work to ensure that victims of wife assault receive the information, shelter and protection required to enable them to establish lives free of terror.

Violence Prevention Education

CFUW, 1992

RESOLVED, That the CFUW urge the Government of Canada and the provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to continue to exercise their leadership roles to ensure security of the person and to promote zero tolerance to violence for Canadian women in the following ways:

1. by expanding the multi-media education campaign on violence against women;
2. by working with relevant professions and community groups to promote strong and consistent violence-prevention education; and
3. by working together to ensure that the community has adequate resources to accommodate the demand for services for abused women and children resulting from the increased education on violence.

Violence-Free Family Life

IFUW, 1998

RESOLVED, That all national federations and associations promote the development and implementation of programs that address the problem of domestic violence with particular reference to the human rights of women and children and that these programs be concerned specifically with:

1. demanding legislation and adequate resources to prevent domestic violence and to protect the victims;
2. encouraging research by governments, universities and private institutions into the incidence, causes, nature and effects of family violence;
3. addressing the social conditions that lead to family violence;
4. rising awareness through the media, seminars and study programs of the increasing levels of violence against women and girls;
5. ensuring that, because of the widespread and increasing incidence of family violence in many societies, education for the peaceful resolution of conflict is included in school curricula at all levels;
6. establishing shelters in the community where those abused can receive protection and support;
7. disseminating information widely about success to help in crises; and
8. developing and supporting strategies whose effectiveness is proven in breaking self-perpetuating patterns of family violence.

Appendix B

Canadian Federation of University Women ONTARIO COUNCIL Club Locations

Ajax – Pickering	Kingston	Oshawa & District
Aurora - Newmarket	Kitchener - Waterloo	Ottawa
Barrie & District	Leaside - East York	Owen Sound & Area
Belleville & District	London	Perth
Brampton	Markham- Unionville	Peterborough
Brantford	Milton & District	Renfrew & District
Burlington	Mississauga	Sarnia Lambton
Cambridge	Muskoka	Saugeen
Chatham -Kent	Nepean	Scarborough
Cornwall & District	Niagara Falls	Southport
Etobicoke	Norfolk	St. Catharines
Georgetown	North Bay	St. Thomas
Georgian Triangle	North Toronto	Stratford
Grimsby	North York	Sudbury
Guelph	Northumberland	Thunder Bay
Haliburton Highlands	Oakville	Toronto
Hamilton	Orangeville & District	Vaughan
Kanata	Orillia	Welland & District
Kincardine	Orleans	Windsor