



National Association of Women and the Law



Association nationale de la femme et du droit



Coalition pour l'équité salariale  
Coalition for Pay Equity



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### **Women's Groups Say Feds Must Act Now on Pay Equity**

*"The Federal government must act now and adopt legislation to guarantee pay equity for all women, as was recommended by the Pay Equity Task Force in the excellent report that it tabled today. Current pay equity provisions are just not working. A new legislative framework is necessary"* says Andrée Côté, for the National Association of Women and the Law (NAWL).

The Pay Equity Task Force recommends the adoption of stand-alone legislation, that will require all federally regulated employers to develop pay equity plans and timetables, and to provide mechanisms that will ensure effective monitoring and enforcement. *"Pay equity is a human right, and it is time that the federal government set an example to the provinces in promoting women's equality in the workplace"* says Jade Duchesneau Bernier of the Coalition for Pay Equity of New Brunswick.

While the Canadian Human Rights Act now provides that it is discriminatory to maintain differences in wages between men and women performing work of equal value, women must file complaints and engage in lengthy litigation to vindicate their rights. This system has been criticized for years by trade union and by national and provincial women's groups, by the Canadian Human Rights Commission itself and even by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Indeed, in January 2003, CEDAW recommended that Canada "accelerate its implementation efforts as regards equal pay for work of equal value".

*"Women in Québec and in the rest of Canada have been fighting long and hard for pay equity: it is time for the Canadian government to act on its constitutional equality obligations, its federal plans and commitments for gender equality and it's many promises towards women"* says Andrée Côté of NAWL.

Michelle Ridgway, of the Prince Edward Island Women's Network adds *"pay equity is one of several necessary measures- along with a sustainable wage, employment equity and affordable childcare to ensure that women are equally respected and valued in the labour market."*

*"We urge all parties to come forward and support the very positive recommendations that were put forward by the Task Force. We are hoping for an*

*immediate response from the Martin government as to its commitment to implementing these recommendations in a timely way,"* says Jennifer Beeman of the Montréal-based Conseil d'intervention pour l'accès des femmes au travail.

*"This is an issue that women will surely have in mind when they are called on to vote in upcoming federal elections"* adds Andrée Côté of NAWL.

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The **National Association of Women and the Law** is a national non-profit organization which promotes the equality rights of women through legal education, research and law reform advocacy.

The **Coalition for Pay Equity** is a group of New Brunswick organizations and individuals that lobbies the provincial government to enact legislation to provide pay equity in both the public and private sectors. Pay equity is equal pay for work of equal or comparable value.

The **Conseil d'intervention pour l'accès des femmes au travail (CIAFT)** is a Québec women's organisation made up of over sixty groups and individuals and works in the area of women's access to the labor market, women's work rights as well as on social programs.

**Women's Network PEI** is a not-for-profit organization that works to strengthen and support the efforts of PEI women to improve the status of women in our society.

For more information, please contact:

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Consult NAWL's Brief to the Pay Equity Task Force at: [www.nawl.ca](http://www.nawl.ca)

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