

March 5, 2009

Bulletin

Take Action for International Women's Day March 8th

Tell your MP to restore the right to pay equity for women and their unions

The origins of International Women's Day are rooted in women's struggles for better working conditions, pay and the right to vote. Ninety eight years since the inception of International Women's Day, women are still fighting for equality here in Canada and around the world. Senior women, women of colour and aboriginal women are among the most poor and in Canada women still only earn 70% of what men earn for full-time work.

So why has Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his federal government rolled back women's rights to pay equity and made it illegal for unions to support their members' pursuit of equal pay?

Yesterday, the federal government passed legislation that will radically change the rules governing pay equity. As part of the *Budget Implementation Act* the federal government has included *The Public Sector Equitable Compensation Act* - which removes the right of public sector workers to file complaints for pay equity with the Canadian Human Rights Commission. This will effectively eliminate women's ability to pursue pay equity complaints by forcing them to file complaints as individuals. This Act imposes a \$50,000 fine on any union that encourages or assists their own members in filing a pay equity complaint, leaving women to fight the system and bear the costs alone. In fact, Canadian women, including representatives from the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions are so concerned that they have gone to the United Nations to condemn the Harper government's record on women's equality. They will also be announcing their intention to file a complaint with the UN Commission on the Status of Women against this law which curtails the rights of women.

Don't stand by and see women's rights eroded.

Send a message to your Member of Parliament and encourage others to do the same.

Call your MPs office now or send an Email through the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions campaign on this issue. (<http://www.nursesunions.ca/content.php?sec=4>)

Go to www.nursesunions.ca and click on Take Action or to find out more.