

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 6, 2009
To: City Manager
From: Women's and Community Advisory Committee
Subject: CFUW Statement on the Regression of Afghan Women's Rights

Report Prepared by: *Staff Liaison, Corinne Boback*

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council receive, for information, the Report of the Women's and Community Advisory Committee dated July 6, 2009;

AND THAT Council authorizes the Mayor, on behalf of Council, to write a letter of support to the Canadian Federation of University Women regarding its position on the Regression of Afghan Women's Rights.

BACKGROUND:

At a regularly scheduled meeting of the Women's and Community Advisory Committee, the topic of Regression of Afghan Women's Rights was discussed as a result of a submission from the Canadian Federation of University Women. The attached letter was originally sent to the Mayor's office for support. The Committee reviewed the letter and passed a resolution to support the continued efforts to enhance women's rights in Afghanistan. The proposed legislation would prevent women from leaving the house without their husband's permission; award custody of children to male relatives only and legalize rape within a marriage.

The Committee feels strongly that a letter of support to the Canadian Federation of University Women from Council would be beneficial.

LEGAL/STATUTORY AUTHORITY:

S. 142 of *Community Charter*

LEGAL/STATUTORY PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS:

Council Procedure Bylaw No. 9200 and Council Committees Policy No. 285

Considerations that were not applicable to this report:

INTERNAL CIRCULATION TO:

EXISTING POLICY:

FINANCIAL/BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS:

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS:

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:

EXTERNAL AGENCY/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS:

ALTERNATE RECOMMENDATION:

Submitted by:



E. Woods, Chair







Canadian Federation of University Women
Fédération Canadienne des Femmes Diplômées des Universités

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CFUW Statement on the Regression of Afghan Women's Rights

The Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) calls on the Government of Canada to continue efforts to eliminate proposed legislation in Afghanistan that threatens women's basic human rights. The legislation contains articles that would prevent women from leaving the house without their husband's permission, awards custody of children to male relatives only, and that legalizes rape within marriage.

Of the law, CFUW President Patricia DuVal echoed the concerns of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay: "This law is an affront to Afghan women, and risks seriously undermining the small steps Afghanistan has made towards compliance with international human rights norms." Mindful of Canada's continued role in Afghanistan, she called on the Canadian government to "involve Afghan women as leaders in peacebuilding efforts and increase support for Afghan women's groups who are working to improve gender equity."

CFUW is committed to continuing its advocacy work at home to ensure that Canadian actions in Afghanistan support women's human rights in a culturally sensitive manner.

CFUW urges members and supporters to sign a petition protesting the law developed by our partner organization CARE Canada at www.care.ca.

Canadian Federation of University Women
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