

**SUBMISSION for 2017**

**Presented to**

**THE RIGHT HONOURABLE KATHLEEN WYNNE**

**Premier of Ontario**

By



**THE BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL  
WOMEN'S CLUBS OF ONTARIO**

Member of the Canadian and International Federation of

Business and Professional Women

November 2017



## **INTRODUCTION**

The Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Ontario (BPW Ontario) is the coordinating organization for the active membership of dedicated working women in clubs across the province.

BPW Ontario membership represents a diverse group of women, in both the public and private sectors of business, industry, and the professions. Our members hold positions as business entrepreneurs, CEO's, managers and employees across a full range of occupational sectors.

Individual clubs within the provincial organization are members of the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW Canada) founded in 1930, and the International Federation of Business and Professional Women (IFBPW) has members in over 100 countries around the world and maintains Consultative Status in the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

Since 1910 BPW Ontario has worked to promote the interests of working women. We have made submissions to government, addressing issues of equal pay and benefits, employment opportunities, employment equity, part time work, child care, maternity leave, pension reform, health issues and other areas of concern to women. BPW Ontario promotes equality as a basic human right, ensuring the full participation of women who comprise 52% of the population. It is believed that through the realization of their full potential, Ontario working women will continue to drive the thriving business and economic climate of today and ensure prosperity for the generations to come.

For continued improvement in the status of women and betterment of the economic, political, employment and social aspects of daily living, BPW Clubs from across the province meet annually to discuss and approve resolutions submitted by individual clubs. The resolutions included in this brief were approved by our membership at the 71st Annual Conference held in Niagara on the Lake, Ontario September 29 – October 1, 2017.

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## Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Ontario

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## Funding for Community Services to Support Sentencing Options for Men Convicted of Domestic Abuse



**RATIONALE:** The media has reported and supported by literature that sentencing men who abuse their spouses often results in light sentences by judges in Canada. Others have reported that judges loathe extending lengthy sentences to men convicted of abusing their wives due to the failure of incarceration to change the men's behaviours. Most programs around the issue of domestic abuse focus on treating women and children following abuse and there is limited attention focused on men and changing their behaviours to end this form of domestic abuse.

In Ontario, treatment courts have successfully rehabilitated those who been convicted of theft and other crimes associated with their drug abuse. Changing Ways is an organization in London, Ontario that focuses on creating partnerships with a variety of services to address ways to change the behaviours of men who reportedly participate in domestic abuse of spouses and at times children.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of Community & Social Services and the Minister of Community Safety & Correctional Services to provide funding support to organizations such as Changing Ways and its partnering organizations whose mandates focus on helping men address their negative behaviours leading to abuse (a five year pilot period to ensure resources are available to ensure that the use of a London, Ontario funded treatment court is able to provide treatment options to those men who are convicted of domestic abuse);

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of Community & Social Services and the Minister of Community Safety & Correctional Services to carry out a robust evaluation to ensure the programs are successful and the impact of the Domestic Abuse Treatment Court Program outcomes on reducing the incidences of domestic violence on women and children.

## Addressing “Unfounded” Cases of Sexual Assault and Violence

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**RATIONALE:** Statistics Canada has not released data related to ‘unfounded’ sexual assault cases records since 2003. Review of data collected from police services has determined that ‘unfounded’ cases in Ontario between the years of 2010 to 2014 averaged at 25%, fluctuating 3% to 59% in different jurisdictions including 34% by the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP).

National and international research indicates that 2% to 8% of sexual assault complaints to police may actually be determined to be false allegations. It is time for the Ontario government to take the lead to ensure policy makers are provided with accurate records as to occurrences of sexual assault and are given direction to create a provincial strategy to prevent this crime and improve safety from violence for women.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services to direct the OPP to review and investigate sexual assault and violence cases that the OPP categorized as unfounded between 2010 and 2015;

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services to direct the OPP to develop a methodology that defines the status of sexual assault and violence case investigations such as to refine the categories of closure regarding complainant’s investigation to be accurately based on objective review of facts in lieu of opinions; such that the language of categories exclude the word ‘unfounded’ or other general terms that may reflect divisive, prejudged, or dismissive opinions towards the complainant in lieu of evidence based investigation;

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services Safety following an objective review of the findings from data collected related to “unfounded” cases to direct the creation and funding of a task force that this data be used by policy makers to direct resources to implement a provincial strategy to reduce the barrier to justice of rates of inappropriate closure of sexual assault and violence case investigations, by the use of means including external audits of OPP case records.

## Bill 26 - Domestic and Sexual Violence Workplace Leave, Accommodation and Training Act



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**RATIONALE:** Half of all Canadian women have experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence in their lifetime; a Canadian woman is killed by her intimate partner approximately once every six days. The experience of domestic violence and sexual violence can cause significant physical, mental, emotional and financial hardship for survivors, their families, and society as a whole. A 2014 national survey showed that Canadian workers who experience domestic violence often disclose the violence to a co-worker, and this violence frequently follows the worker to work.

Domestic violence results in Canadian employers losing \$78 million annually due to domestic violence, and \$18 million due to sexual violence, because of the direct and indirect impacts that include distraction, decreased productivity, and absenteeism. Workers who experience domestic violence or sexual violence should not have to jeopardize their employment in order to seek medical attention, access counselling, relocate, or deal with police, lawyers or the courts.

The Final Report of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment recommended that the Ontario government make education about domestic or intimate partner violence in the workplace mandatory for managers, supervisors, and workers.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Chair of the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly to expedite the review of Bill 26 Domestic & Sexual Violence Workplace Leave Accommodation and Training Act to allow the Third Reading to occur as soon as possible;

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario to pass Bill 26 Domestic & Sexual Violence Workplace Leave Accommodation & Training Act and the day Bill 26 receives Royal Assent is the date Bill 26 takes effect.

## Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee's Report's Recommendations

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**RATIONALE:** Since 1987 Ontario has had Pay Equity Legislation and still the average woman in Ontario earns 69.7%% of that of a man. The gender wage gap (GWG) is the result of social and organizational practices which results in marginalized women in Ontario experiencing a significantly higher GWG. The Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee's (GWGSSC) Final Report has 20 recommendations that would help close the gender wage gap.

The following recommendations are critical to resolving this issue:

- Recommendation 1 urges the government to develop a child care system for working Ontario families that provides high quality, affordable, and is accessible, publicly funded, and geared to income child care;
- Recommendation 9 urges the government to develop and adopt pay transparency policies which can be publicly accessed, encourage all other businesses and organizations to follow suit, and create legislation to protect employees who share their personal pay information;
- Recommendation 10 urges the development of a tool which collects data, establishes indicators, and assists in tracking and reporting to be implemented initially within government ministries, its agencies, boards, and commissions, then public sector workplaces, and finally encourage businesses to use this tool;
- Recommendation 13 urges the creation of a social awareness campaign which increases the public's understanding of gender bias and the causes of the GWG, promotes gender equality in all sections of society and the need to close the GWG; and
- Recommendation 17 urges all government all ministries to apply gender-based analysis when designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating of all government policies and programs.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Labour, and the Minister of the Status of Women to immediately adopt and implement the twenty recommendations as outlined in the Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee 2016 Final Report;

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of Labour and the Minister of the Status of Women to commit to implementing the Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee 2016 Final Report's Recommendations 1, 9, 10, 13, and 17 within the next six to twelve months.





## Closing the Gender Wage Gap: Reduce Childcare Barriers

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**RATIONALE:** Currently the average woman in Ontario earns 69% of that of a man. In 2011, nearly 500 000 families were headed by females only. Countries such as Iceland, Slovenia, Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands see childcare as an essential social infrastructure and make their early childcare and education systems affordable or free depending on the family's circumstances. Quebec's subsidized childcare program annually generates \$200 million to their economy.

The Government of Ontario's Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee identified that sharing family responsibilities will help to close the gender wage gap and could result in \$2.6 billion increase to Ontario government's revenues and a saving of \$103 million in social programs spending. The Committee's Recommendations 1 and 2 specifically outlined where the government needs to urgently focus when addressing these barriers.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario strongly urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of Labour and the Minister of the Status of Women to implement Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee's Final Report within six months;

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of Finance to ensure adequate funding to the implementation of these recommendations.

## Pay Transparency to Reduce the Gender Wage Gap

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**RATIONALE:** While some progress has been realized since the introduction of significant pieces of legislation, such as the 1951 Female Employees Fair Remuneration Act; 1962 The Ontario Human Rights Code; 1987, Pay Equity Act; 2000 (Updated 2014) the Ontario Employment Standards Act, the gender wage gap persists. The gender wage gap accumulates its impact over time. As women earn on average less than men through their working lives, the differences in their employment incomes will increase through the years. Since retirement income mainly flows from employment earnings, this leads to a gender pension gap and can put women at greater risk of poverty when they retire.

Pay transparency is an excellent first step to identifying and correcting other practices that may have an impact on the gender wage gap. Making pay information available can remove opportunities for pay discrimination, thus helping to shift the business culture and expectations towards greater equality. With knowledge of pay rates or ranges, employees are in a better position to negotiate fairer salaries. The Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee's Recommendation 9 supports the need for pay transparency and makes suggestions on how the government can do this.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of Labour, and the Minister of Finance to undertake strategies to develop and adopt pay transparency policies for the Ontario Public Service (OPS);

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario to set an example by publicizing information or data on the Ontario Public Service's compensation or salary ranges by gender;

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of Labour to consider legislation to include protection against reprisal for employees sharing their personal pay information;

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of Finance, and the Minister of Labour to work with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, and The Human Resource Professional Association to introduce wage transparency reporting by setting wage transparency rules after consulting on what reporting requirements would be appropriate for businesses in Ontario.

## Gender Based Analysis Tool and Policies to Reduce the Gender Wage Gap



**RATIONALE:** Gender-based analysis (GBA) allows organizations to address gender issues and the potential impact of their policies, programs, services, and initiatives on women and men. GBA helps to advance women's equality in all aspects of society. The Status of Women Canada has created the GBA+ Framework contains six key elements when implementing and sustaining GBA. The Auditor General of Canada has identified the strengths of the GBA+ Framework and has made recommendations on how to use the Framework.

The Ontario public believes the government should be the leader in using GBA when creating programs, policies, and initiatives. The Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee's Recommendation 10 urges the creation of a GBA tool all ministries and agencies would pilot with a review of the tools effectiveness after three years. The data from that review would facilitate any necessary revisions to the tool before expanding the tool's use to other businesses and organizations and supports the Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee's Recommendation 17 urges all government ministries to apply gender-based analysis when addressing policies and programs.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario strongly urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of Labour and the Minister of the Status of Women to implement Recommendations 10 and 17 of the Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee's Final Report to all government departments and agencies within the next eighteen months;

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of Labour to use the Gender Based Analysis+ (GBA+) Framework used by the Government of Canada;

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of Finance to ensure adequate funding to the implementation of this recommendation.



**RATIONALE:** Social awareness campaigns have been an effective way to can change behavioural and social norms. An example of a social awareness campaign is #WhoWillYouHelp. This campaign has received more than 85 million views worldwide and focuses on sexual violence. A possible benefit from an effective social awareness campaign addressing the gender wage gap could be to increase the wages of immigrant women and women with disabilities who currently earn less than 75% of that of men. Another benefit could be to encourage girls and women to have careers in industries such as engineering, computer sciences, and the trades all of which are currently contribute to a large gender wage gap.

The Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee’s Recommendation 13 urges the creation of a social awareness campaign to increase the public’s understanding of gender bias and the causes of the GWG, promotes gender equality in all sections of society and the need to close the GWG. The campaign needs to understand that the organization leaders’ biases strongly influence workplace cultures so awareness and education are required at all levels.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of the Status of Women and the Minister of Labour, to develop and implement within 6 -12 months a sustained social awareness strategy campaign with a series of well-targeted messages to:

1. Help educate people to understand the impact of gender bias by challenging the attitudes and myths and encourage long-term generational shifts to end deep-rooted attitudes and behaviours
2. Spread the message of current research on gender perceptions and norms
3. Promote gender equality at home, at work, and in the community
4. Increase the public’s understanding of the causes of the gender wage gap and why it is important to close this gap
5. Help educate, inspire, and empower individuals, businesses, labour unions, and organizations how they can be part of the solution and what to do to effect change;

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of the Status of Women and the Minister of Labour to promote positive images and stories of women and men in a variety of occupations to show gender equality;

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of the Status of Women and the Minister of Labour, to partner with organizations to develop and deliver a wide range of awareness materials, through appropriate and innovative channels that provide best practices and share policies that have had a positive impact;

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, specifically the Minister of the Status of Women and the Minister of Labour to evaluate the campaign’s effectiveness within two years.



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