Notable Canadian Women Oppose Motion 312

September 24, 2012

Call to All Women Sitting in the House of Commons

We, the undersigned, call on all women sitting in the House of Commons to stand up for women's rights. No matter what your political affiliation, we call on you to vote against Motion 312 and defend a woman's right to choose.

Motion 312 is slated for a vote in the House of Commons on September 26. This motion represents a clear threat to reproductive rights if it passes. It would pave the way for the recriminalization of abortion, as supporters of this motion willingly admit.

The decision to end an unwanted pregnancy has been recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada as a woman's constitutional right, in the Morgentaler and the Daigle cases.

Women's rights are human rights is more than a catchy slogan. It means that we need to conceive of human rights from a woman's perspective. Women's reproductive rights are recognized in international human rights law, in particular in CEDAW. And the UN Conference on Population and Development recently declared that adolescents and youths should have "control over and decide freely and responsibly" on their sexuality and reproductive health.

The decision to have a child is one of the most important decisions in a woman's life. Once a woman gives birth, she will always remain the mother of her child. It is a decision that carries significant social, economic, legal and familial consequences. It is a decision that women take seriously, after careful consideration, because they know that giving life is more than an abstract concept.

The criminalization of abortion transforms all women into second class citizens, because any man, institution or government can then dictate her destiny. The House of Commons must fully respect women's dignity and promote their human rights.

We call on you, women who sit in the House of Commons, to stand up and defend the right of each and every woman to freedom of conscience, to physical and psychological security, and to equality.

We call on you, and all MPs, to vote against Motion 312.

Signatories:

Arlette Alcock, Métis singer/songwriter, Songwriter of the Year at 2008 Native E Music Awards (Albuquerque NM), multiple nominee at 2009 Aboriginal Peoples Choice Awards

Candace Batycki, City Councilor in Nelson BC, former Director of Forest Programs for Forest Ethics **Robyn Benson**, National President, Public Service Alliance of Canada

Dawn Black, MLA for New Westminster in the BC Legislature and former Member of Parliament **Sharon Blady**, M.A. Ph.D. (ABD), MLA - Kirkfield Park, Winnipeg

Jane Bouey, Former Vice Chair Vancouver School Board, current host W2 Media Mornings - Vancouver Co-op Radio

Susan B. Boyd, Holds endowed research Chair in Feminist Legal Studies at UBC; past Director of UBC's Centre for Feminist Legal Studies (1997-2012); Fellow of Royal Society of Canada

Linda Briskin, Professor, Social Science Department/School of Women's Studies, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, York University

Barbara Byers, Executive Vice-President, Canadian Labour Congress

Jane Cawthorne, Author, playwright, blogger, feminist, activist / former Chair, Planned Parenthood Alberta (Calgary)

Marie Clarke Walker, Executive Vice-President, Canadian Labour Congress

Rebecca Cook, Professor in Faculty of Law, Faculty of Medicine and Joint Centre for Bioethics, University of Toronto

Judy Darcy, Long-time New Democrat, community advocate, and Canadian trade union leader **Nicole Demers**, Former Bloc Québécois MP, Laval, Québec

Jane Doe, Activist, author, educator, Toronto

Barb Dolan, Administrative Vice-President, Ontario Region, Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada (CEP)

Denise Doyle, CEO, YWCA Hamilton, Co-Chair Hamilton Status of Women Committee

Louise Dulude, Past-president of National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), LL.B., LL.M., LL.D.; M.A. and Ph.D. in experimental psychology

Kim Elliott, Publisher, rabble.ca

Deborah Gorham, Distinguished Research Professor, Department of History, Carleton University **Kasari Govender**, LL.B., M.St. (Oxon), Executive Director, West Coast Women's Legal Education & Action Fund

Jamie Lee Hamilton, Long-time Downtown Eastside and Sex Work advocate, Miss Gay Vancouver 1 and X1

Sue Hammell, Member of the Legislative Assembly of BC – Surrey-Green Timbers

Barbara Hestrin, President-Elect of Options for Sexual Health, Past President of Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada, Recipient: YWCA Woman of Distinction award, Dr. Marion Powell Award

Greta Hofmann Nemiroff, Writer, Educator, Coordinator of Women's Studies, Dawson College, Montreal

Sue Johanson, R.N., Sexual Educator and Counsellor, Order of Canada recipient

K. Linda Kivi, Author, feminist, environmental and social justice activist, Columbia Mountains, BC

Penney Kome, Author, award-winning journalist, and Editor of StraightGoods.com

Jenny Wai Ching Kwan, Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), Vancouver-Mt. Pleasant, BC

Kathleen Lahey, Professor and Queen's National Scholar, Faculty of Law, Queen's University; cochair Feminist Legal Studies Queen's

Michele Landsberg, Former Star columnist, author, feminist activist

Bev LeFrancois, 2010 Governor General's Person's Award recipient

Abby Lippman, PhD, feminist academic (McGill University) and activist

Heather Mallick, Toronto Star columnist, author, feminist

Maureen McTeer, Lawyer and Author, Adjunct Professor of Law, University of Ottawa

Kelly Moist, President, Canadian Union of Public Employees Manitoba

Renae Morriseau, Writer, producer, director, singer, actor; with M'Girl - Aboriginal Women's Ensemble

Susan Murphy, President of the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW)

Francine Pelletier, journalist, filmmaker and women's advocate

Geneviève Rail, Professor of Women's Health and Principal of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University

Judy Rebick, Journalist, feminist, holds GINDIN Chair in social justice and democracy at Ryerson University in Toronto

Candace Rennick, Secretary-Treasurer, Canadian Union of Public Employees Ontario

Wendy Robbins, PAR-L co-moderator and coordinator of Women's Studies, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton

Sanda Rodgers, Professor Emeritus, Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa; legal expert in women's reproductive rights, health law and equality law

Marilyn Roycroft, Acting Executive Director, LEAF (Women's Legal Education and Action Fund),
Toronto

Susan A C Russell, Millennium Medalist, Human Rights Activist, former NGO executive director and long term equality seeker

Özlem Sensoy, Associate Professor of Education and Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby BC

Muriel Smith, OC OM LLD, Winnipeg

Wendy Sol, Administrative Vice-President, Western Region, Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada (CEP)

Verena Stefan, Swiss/German writer (Canadian citizen since 2000), feminist, lesbian activist since 1971. Founding member of the women's group Brot und Rosen (Bread and Roses) Berlin

Veronica Strong-Boag, Ph.d, F.R.S.C., Professor, Women's & Gender Studies/Educational Studies, University of British Columbia

Lucinda Vandervort, Professor of Law, University of Saskatchewan, lawyer and legal philosopher with expertise in equality rights, bio-ethics, and criminal law

Bernadette Wagner, Poet, Blogger & Feminist Activist

Julie White, Director, Women's Programs, Canadian Auto Workers Canada (CAW TCA)

Ellen Wiebe, Clinical Professor, Reproductive health, UBC; Medical Director at Willow Women's Clinic

Nettie Wiebe, Professor of Church and Society at St. Andrew's College, University of Saskatchewan; former president of National Farmers Union; activist

Janice Williamson, PhD, Professor, Department of English & Film Studies, University of Alberta

Ellen Woodsworth, Former Vancouver City Councillor

Lise Zarac, former Liberal M.P. Lasalle-Émard, Québec