

Application for Standing of Women's Equality & Security Coalition

APPENDIX A

Descriptions of the Members of the WESC Coalition

1. The National Congress of Black Women Foundation

The National Congress of Black Women Foundation is a registered charity that promotes and facilitates activities and model programs, which foster advancement, recognition, health and education of black women and their families through funding and research.

In 1992, the National Congress of Black Women Foundation (NCBWF) received its charitable status marking an important milestone in the evolution of the Congress of Black Women of Canada, the Executive Council of the Congress, and its local chapters. Since 1992, the NCBWF has put in place a volunteer Board of Directors and other structures that will enable it to undertake various programs and activities for Black women and their families.

The NCBWF is an organization whose mandate is fulfilled nationally through community-based services, personal, and professional development programs across Canada. The NCBWF began locally in British Columbia to secure funding in order to advance opportunities for black women and girls and has grown into a multi-faceted, non-profit organization that operates nationally. The NCBWF sponsors educational, social cultural and health related programs and projects. These projects are designed to meet the needs and concerns of black women and their families by enhancing their quality of life.

The aims of NCBW are to:

- Provide growth and educational opportunities for women and girls.
- Promote better health preservation and prevention through education., with specific emphasis on HIV and AIDS.
- Engage in fact-finding and research on issues uniquely affecting black women and their families.
- Raise funds for scholarships and programs.
- Engage in charitable activities.
- Train and educate youth on leadership skills and community responsibility.

2. Aboriginal Women's Action Network

The Aboriginal Women's Action Network (AWAN) was established in 1995 in response to a pressing need for an Aboriginal women's group to provide a much needed voice for Aboriginal women's concerns regarding governance, policy making, women's rights, employment rights, violence against women, Indian Act membership and status, and many other issues affecting

Aboriginal women in contemporary society. The founding members of AWAN conceived of themselves as salmon swimming upstream with determined vision to create new life, and therefore, renewed hope and possibilities for our children. For members of AWAN the Salmon Nation's legacy of survival depends on an unwavering commitment to future generations, a commitment which serves to guide AWAN in our political involvement and quest for social justice for Aboriginal women and children. Most recently, AWAN has taken a stand against the total decriminalization and/or legalization of prostitution."

3. Coalition of Childcare Advocates

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC is a voluntary organization of interested citizens, parents, child care providers, community organizations and unions who advocate for the development of a comprehensive, community based non-profit child care system that is high quality, affordable accessible, publicly funded and accountable. We support the right of every child and family to quality child care within their own community within a range of inclusive, licensed care that meets their needs. We support child care workers' rights to wages and working conditions which reflect the level of training, responsibility and value of work performed.

4. Justice for Girls

Founded in 1999, Justice for Girls' core purpose is to advocate for social and economic equality and freedom from male violence for teenage girls (under 19) who live in poverty. We provide systemic and individual advocacy in response to violence against girls, homelessness, and access to justice issues. Justice for Girls also conducts public education about the health and well being of girls who are homeless.

5. Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centers (CASAC)

The Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centers is a pan Canadian coalition of sexual assault rape crisis centers and transition houses. Since 1975 CASAC has provided opportunities for centers to learn and share best practices, for building joint policies and procedures and for pressing together for social change at the national and international level. CASAC member centers serve in most major cities including Montreal Quebec, Halifax, St John's, Ottawa and Vancouver as well as in many smaller centers from Timmins to Saskatoon. Members are individual autonomous centers, for instance Vancouver Rape Relief Society. At the invitation of five consecutive Ministers of Justice, CASAC served as host of broad based women's national consultations on matters of violence against women ranging from law on rape and stalking, trafficking and prostitution to reconsiderations of legal defenses, custody and access agreements in divorce law and immigration matters particularly those related to women as guest and temporary workers.

1993-2003 CASAC with the cooperation and funding of the national Department of Justice conducted a national development program called CASAC Links resulting in a report: Canada's Promises to Keep: the Charter and Violence Against Women

CASAC convened both a national membership convention and a national Day of Feminist Dialogue in 2005 to focus expertise of women's equality experts on the results of a five year research program with particular attention to the missing and murdered aboriginal women, matter of policing violence against all women, diversion programs, exit services and issues of women's poverty.

CASAC research and policy includes needed changes to police, prosecution and courts as well as immigration, alternate dispute mechanisms and the needs of racialized and colonized communities of women in the advances toward the equality of women.

6. EVE

EVE (formerly Exploited Voices now Educating) is a non-governmental, non-profit group composed of former sex-industry women dedicated to naming prostitution "violence against women" and seeing its abolition through political action, advocacy, and awareness raising that focuses on ending the demand for paid sexual access to women and children's bodies. EVE operates under a sex positive feminist model, acknowledging that prostitution is born out of sexism, classism, racism, poverty and other forms of systemic oppression.

7. Vancouver Rape Relief Society

Vancouver Rape Relief Society is a registered charity which operates in British Columbia by providing a 24 hour phone line available to women in crisis with regards to male violence against women. Founded in 1973, Vancouver Rape Relief is the first rape crisis center in Canada and has operated continuously through more than 30 years. For its work in providing services it has economic support from the BC government, the City of Vancouver. Beyond that, Rape Relief enjoys a high level of community support in donations, endorsements and engagement by volunteers, media, academics and community developers.

Through crisis services and others, Rape Relief seeks social change to advance the equality of all women. To victims of male violence it offers counselling, short term housing, advocacy to access appropriate criminal justice and health care. Rape Relief and Women's Shelter offers information to and learns from its callers and in that exchange creates and organizes options in the community to help women to escape, prevent and recover from male violence against women. Vancouver Rape Relief has a long history of addressing the male violence against women in our city and province particularly as it affects the young, the economically dispossessed and the racialized.

Vancouver Rape Relief is a collective currently comprised of 20 women members, ten of whom are paid. A further 20 unpaid women are in training. Within our group are women educated at university as, teachers, engineers, social workers, journalists and business women. Some have raised children on welfare or are currently doing so and some have been prostituted as children, some are immigrants within the last decade and many were born and raised in the province by parents who immigrated in past generations. Our membership includes women from several first nations and five or more language groups.

8. UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S CLUB of VANCOUVER

The University Women's Club of Vancouver is a not for profit organization of women graduates from around the world. It was formed in 1907. The UWCV promotes education and opportunities for women. It is a member club of the Canadian and International Federations of University Women. These organizations and the UWCV promote social responsibility and advocacy of policies drafted by their members. The UWVC also provides scholarships and bursaries to graduate students. This year the Canadian Federation of University Women, with a membership of approximately 10,000, approved a resolution calling on governments to provide adequate exit services to prostitutes so that they can live productive, safe and secure lives outside of prostitution. This resolution was drafted by the Vancouver club. The University Women's Club of Vancouver has followed the tragedy of the missing and murdered women and provided public education forums about this and prostitution in the city for the past several years.

9. The Poverty & Human Rights Coalition

The Poverty and Human rights Centre (PHRC) is a non-profit research and education organization whose goals include enhancing legal analysis and research about rights to social and economic security. The mandate of the PHRC is to promote compliance with the human rights commitments that Canada has made; to advance interpretations of rights that resist the marginalization of social and economic rights; to develop proposals for law reform and institutional renewal that will assist in the fulfillment of rights obligations; and to educate the public about the human rights implications of government choices that erode social programmes and deepen poverty and social and economic inequality. The PHRC has a particular interest in the realization of the poorest women.

In furtherance of its goals, the PHRC engages in research, analysis, writing and public education, and collaborates with community groups, scholars, lawyers and students, in research and strategic legal advocacy initiatives.

10. The Asian Women Coalition Ending Prostitution

The Asian Women Coalition Ending Prostitution (AWCEP) is a Canadian feminist group based in Vancouver. The group formed in 2005 in order to bring attention to the harm suffered by Asian women caused by prostitution. AWCEP is deeply aware that Asian women are subject to human trafficking as an integral aspect of our experience of prostitution. AWCEP works to bring attention to Asian women who wish to escape prostitution including those women who are already in prostitution and those who wish to avoid being recruited, trafficked or otherwise pressed into prostitution. Our activity includes researching and providing information to the public about Asian women in prostitution, particularly about those women trafficked into and through Vancouver; and outreach and information sharing with elected officials at all three levels of government. We seek to ensure that solutions adopted will recognize the need to address systemic racism, sexism and social economic disadvantage in order to protect and enhance the rights of Asian women as a group in Canada as well as create similar opportunities for women in all countries of origin.

11. Provincial Council of Women

The history of the Provincial Council of Women of BC begins with the election of Lady Aberdeen as President of the International Council of Women (ICW), and, following the appointment of her husband as Governor General of Canada, subsequent leadership of the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC), established October 1893, and her role in founding Local Councils across the Dominion. (Vancouver Council of Women was established November 1894). The idea was to bring diverse people together to work for a common cause, believing that an organized movement of women would best conserve the highest good of the Family and the State. National Council was incorporated by Act of Parliament in June, 1914. In 1919 the Constitution was revised to allow provincial councils. In 1926, the Constitution of the Provincial Council of Women of British Columbia was approved by NCWC.

The Council's organized work includes women's concerns in education, social reform, civil law government, and industry. Policy is developed through a Resolution process.

Affiliated organizations carry on their own activities, and benefit from inspiration and new ideas through contact and discussion with women of other groups in their country.