



For Immediate Release

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### YWCA Canada Speaks Out at Rally on the Hill

Throughout our member associations across Canada, the shock of the Harper Government's attack on The Status of Women Canada is awakening a fighting spirit among ordinary women.

On December 10<sup>th</sup> 2006, Human Rights Day and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Canada's ratification of International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination, YWCA Canada takes to The Hill in solidarity with other women's groups across Canada. CEO Paulette Senior speaks to Canadians about what the Harper cuts mean to communities across Canada.

For 135 years, YWCA Canada has expressed the spirit, the struggle and the dedication of women who fought for the improved status of women in Canada. Today, YWCA Canada remains the largest women's multi-service organization in the country with 36 Member Associations providing essential programs and services to 1 million women, teen girls, and their families every year in 200 communities across Canada.

The removal of "advocacy" and "equality" from the Terms and Conditions for Status of Women funding, in addition to the cuts and closures across the country to Status of Women offices, have angered the ordinary women who make up our membership across the country. The YWCA staff who work in our shelters, employment programs, children's services, permanent housing and counseling groups witness this failed promise in their work with women each day.

With cuts to the Court Challenges program and its chill on advocacy, the current government seems determined to undermine the very mechanisms for maintaining a healthy democratic culture that YWCA exists to protect.

YWCA represents Canadian women who care about a just and fair Canada. The values with which we raise our children, work at our jobs, involve ourselves in our communities, and cast our ballots are under attack. We are ready to fight back.

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