



**ON ISSUES THAT MATTER TO WOMEN,  
THE 2015 FEDERAL ELECTION  
BOILS DOWN TO A SIMPLE CHOICE:**

- We can do better
- Let's settle for less

Important information to help you elect an MP who knows:

**We can** ensure that everybody can retire with dignity.

**We can** have a national public child care program.

**We can** have quality public services.

**We can** have gender equality.

**PROGRESS  
NOW!** **WE CAN DO BETTER:  
IT'S TIME FOR CHANGE**

# We can do better on the issues that matter to women.

**D**espite the gains women have made over the last few decades, in Canada, women are a long way from full gender equality. At the rate we are going, women won't get there for another 225 years.\*

Clearly, as a country, we can do much better than that. How? By voting for a government that puts at the top of the agenda the values we care about—like women's equality.

The fact is that the government can make decisions that will reduce gender inequality and provide greater opportunities for women.

Our government can choose to create a jobs strategy that provides stable employment and a living wage for women. Research shows that women have a harder time finding full-time employment. Stats Canada recorded that “of all part-time workers in 2009, nearly 7 out of 10 were women.”

Our government can choose to value the work of women at home and provide increased supports for working mothers. Women still assume more domestic and care-giving duties. Supports such as a national public child care or elder care program would provide a real benefit to these women.

Our government can choose to make it illegal to pay women less than their male counterparts.

Our government can choose to take the lead in combating violence against women and girls. Concrete steps need to be taken to ensure women are safe at home and in their workplace.

Our government can adequately fund public

services and social programs that help lift women out of poverty, beginning with a national public child care program and affordable housing and education.

The current federal government seems particularly ignorant of the challenges facing Canadian women. It has:

- **Removed** women's ability to file a complaint based on pay inequity.
- **Cut** vital public services that would help support women and their families.
- **Refused** to invest in a jobs strategy to create good, stable jobs that provide a living wage.
- **Dismissed** the idea of a national public child care program that would allow women to fully participate in the workforce and reduce the financial burden on families.
- **Eliminated** funding for important advocacy groups such as Status of Women Canada.

The Conservatives' anti-equality decisions are shocking, but they are not surprising. They represent a fundamental bias that sees women as a “special interest group” rather than the majority of the population.

We can do better, and it starts by electing confident and optimistic leaders whose parties and policies will help promote equality instead of standing in its way.

To help decide which of your candidates is most likely to do better, consider the following ballot:

\* Closing Canada's Gender Gap, Kate McInturff, April 2013, [www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/closing-canadas-gender-gap](http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/closing-canadas-gender-gap).



**WE CAN DO BETTER: IT'S TIME FOR CHANGE**

## DIGNIFIED RETIREMENT

**Retired women are twice as likely as retired men to live in poverty, and as more and more workers lose their workplace pensions, the situation will only grow worse.**

- WE CAN DO BETTER** by investing a couple of extra dollars a day in the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) so that everybody is assured a dignified retirement.
- WE MUST SETTLE FOR LESS** by continuing to refuse to improve CPP, meaning women will have to get by on even smaller pensions, if they have one at all.

## NATIONAL PUBLIC CHILD CARE PROGRAM

**When Quebec instituted universal \$7-a-day child care 10 years ago, the province's economy got an incredible boost. Women were suddenly able to return to work without a massive financial impact. Researchers say Quebec has made \$1.40 for every \$1 invested in child care.**

- WE CAN DO BETTER** by investing in a national public child care program that will allow any parent who wants to work to do so, boosting the economy for everybody.
- WE MUST SETTLE FOR LESS** by continuing to send parents small cheques that come nowhere close to covering the total costs of their child care needs, and do nothing to address the low wages for workers who care for our children.

## QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES

**Cutting or privatizing public services hurts women in many ways. Nearly three-quarters of all public sector workers are women. Until full gender equality is achieved, more women will continue to depend on public services.**

- WE CAN DO BETTER** by investing in the quality public services that support the women who provide them, and the women who depend on them.
- WE MUST SETTLE FOR LESS** by continuing to cut and privatize public services.

## GENDER EQUALITY IN PARLIAMENT

**The United Nations says that at least one third of a government caucus must be women before that government will begin to truly respond to women's concerns. Today, just 16 per cent of federal Conservative MPs are women.**

- WE CAN DO BETTER** by taking active steps to ensure that our government more accurately reflects and represents women's priorities.
- WE MUST SETTLE FOR LESS** by allowing political parties to ignore public policy that will improve the lives of women, or even refuse to take part in debates on those policies.

# <sup>The</sup> We can do better Checklist

This election is a chance for us to start doing better. There are all kinds of things you can do to help make it happen. It's just like a buffet—feel free to try them all!

- Ensure you're registered to vote (by visiting [www.elections.ca](http://www.elections.ca) or calling 1-800-463-6868).
- Encourage three other people to ensure they're registered to vote.
- Vote (in an advance poll if possible).
- Post a brief note on social media explaining why you're planning to vote.
- Face-to-face, tell three people why you plan to vote.
- By text or email, tell three people why you plan to vote.
- Raise an issue you care about during an election debate or all-candidates forum.
- Volunteer for your candidate.
- Invite three people to volunteer for your candidate.
- Become a candidate.



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*All Together Now!* is the campaign of a large group of Canadians who believe we all reap the rewards of Good Jobs, Quality Public Services, Tax Fairness, and Labour Rights. The campaign is sponsored by the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE), which is made up of hundreds of thousands of public and private employees across Canada.

