

2003:04

RESOURCES FOR RURAL AND URBAN MUNICIPALITIES

Whereas: rural and urban municipalities are increasingly asked to assume more responsibilities by federal and provincial governments without adequate resources or powers to carry out these responsibilities; and

Whereas: Canadian municipalities are created and governed by the provinces but have very limited fiscal and other powers and carry heavy responsibilities which affect our daily lives; and

Whereas: the property tax base was meant to cover services relating to property, (e.g. operating costs for sanitation, snow clearance, sewage, water supply, etc.) but it is not suitable for services such as income re-distribution, major infrastructure such as roads and highways, public transit, affordable housing, or major urban renewal; and

Whereas: the ability of Canadian municipalities to compete internationally is impaired by their lack of fiscal and other powers compared to those in other developed countries which rely less on property taxes and more on transfers from other levels of government as well as their own greater power to borrow, and to establish local taxes or grants; and

Whereas: between 1995 and 2000 municipal tax revenues in Canada only increased 6% barely keeping pace with population, while in the same period federal revenues increased by 21% and provincial by 13% in spite of the urban areas being the country's main engine of revenue growth to the nation; therefore be it

RESOLVED: that the National Council of Women of Canada adopt as its policy that:

- a. rural and urban municipalities be given the resources and powers by senior levels of government commensurate with the responsibilities and challenges they must now meet;
- b. federal, provincial and territorial governments transfer sufficient funds to rural and urban municipalities to reflect their additional responsibilities and their ability to compete internationally; and be it further

RESOLVED: that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to:

- a. provide additional resources to rural and urban municipalities to meet their increased responsibilities and maintain their ability to compete in the world market; and
- b. work with and encourage the provincial and territorial governments to designate resources and powers to all municipalities sufficient to meet their increased responsibilities; and be it further

RESOLVED: that the National Council of Women of Canada urge Provincial and Local Councils (where applicable) to urge their respective provincial governments to provide resources and powers to their rural and urban municipalities sufficient to meet their increased responsibilities.