

2004:07 RIGHTS TO SAME SEX MARRIAGE

Whereas the issue of same sex marriage has become a priority political issue, spurred by the court rulings in BC, Quebec and Ontario that denying the right to same sex marriage is discriminatory and unconstitutional; and

Whereas the National Council of Women of Canada has a diverse membership whose opinion on this issue is similarly diverse; and

Whereas the choice is to ignore the issue or to wrestle with it to find the over-riding principles that can be collectively supported; and

Whereas the usual way for differences of opinion among the members to be resolved is through the resolution process whereby, after deliberation, members are free to accept, reject or amend the resolution; and

Whereas with growing understanding of the nature of sexuality and the respective roles of nature and nurture, and with the recognition that the role of the state is to recognize the contract two citizens wish to make to live together as a couple, to bear children or not, or to adopt or foster children, or utilize reproduction technology, and when there are children, to raise them in a loving and supportive environment; and

Whereas there is a role for spiritual organizations, should the individuals involved so choose, to offer or deny their particular forms of blessing to the spiritual and emotional aspects of the unions; therefore be it

Resolved that the National Council of Women of Canada, in recognition of the diversity of belief in Canada, the human rights of all, the constitutional forbidding of all forms of discrimination, and the importance of supporting stable, loving families, adopt a policy in support of civil rights to marriage; and be it further

Resolved that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to proceed with legislation to confirm the civil right of all persons to enter into marriage to the exclusion of all others, and continue to affirm the right of individuals to select as well the blessing of the religious community of their choice, and the right of such religious institutions to offer or deny their blessings in accordance with their beliefs and traditions.