

2007:01

**CONCERNING PROPOSED REFORM OF THE CANADIAN SENATE**

**Whereas 1** the strength of the Canadian Senate has always been its ability to provide sober second thought about the substance of new legislation, and a longer term approach to issues, because of its relative immunity from the kind of political pressures which arise from the need to be re-elected; and

**Whereas 2** in 2006 the Government of Canada proposed to introduce voting on preferred candidates for appointment to the Senate, which would be an attempt to make constitutional change without bringing in a constitutional amendment; and

**Whereas 3** with an elected Senate, the Canadian Parliament would consist of two elected bodies, which could very well result in struggles for power between the two bodies and sometimes in stalemate; and

**Whereas 4** retaining an appointed Senate would not preclude a thorough review of the appointment process, including criteria for selection and length of tenure, the importance of regional representation and equal representation of women; therefore be it

**Resolved 1** that the National Council of Women of Canada adopt as policy that the Canadian Parliament continue to be made up of an elected House of Commons and an appointed Senate; and be it further

**Resolved 2** that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to reject proposals for an elected Senate; and be it further

**Resolved 3** that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to undertake a thorough review of the process of appointment to the Senate to include:

- a. continuing to support women by having women comprise 50% of the Senate within five (5) years
- b. reviewing criteria for termination of service of Senators
- c. considering the appropriate length of tenure for Senators
- d. developing criteria for selection which reflect diversity and regional differences, with adequate representation of different sections of the population.