

88.1 Housing: A National Emergency

Whereas, Vacancy rates across Canada are unacceptably low, with many thousands of Canadians spending more than 30 percent of their income for housing (which is often inadequate), thus having too little for food and other essentials;
and,
Whereas, Vast numbers of Canadians are on waiting lists for rent geared to income (RGI) housing;
and,
Whereas, Many of those in need are low-income seniors, female-led single parent families, singles, unemployed youth, battered women and the psychiatrically disabled; and,
Whereas, Singles and special needs groups are not part of the main stream in existing housing programmes and are routinely denied access to RGI housing; and,
Whereas, Co-ops, which offer a substantial number of family units across Canada, are restricted to a comparably low rate of RGI units to other social housing programmes; and,
Whereas, Although the Federal Government has initiated a broad range of valuable programmes to target those most in need, the overwhelming number of persons needing housing dictate an immediate and substantial acceleration in the provision of these programmes and a closer working relationship with the Provincial and Territorial Governments to assure all low-income Canadians adequate, affordable housing; therefore be it,

RESOLVED, That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada:

1. To declare a "National State of Emergency" as it relates to housing those persons most in need;
2. To initiate, in co-operation with the Provinces and Territories, a ten-year plan of action to provide adequate, affordable housing through existing and new innovative programmes;
3. To make a major financial commitment to facilitate these programmes, with funds being channelled mainly through non-profit and co-operative housing programmes with:
 - a) An increase in the allocation of co-operative units;
 - b) An increase in subsidy for RGI units in co-ops to allow for up to 50 percent RGI;
 - c) A change in criteria for non-profit housing programmes to allow singles (over 16) to be eligible for RGI,
4. To work closely with the Provincial and Territorial Government to ensure that all Canadians have equal access to such programmes and that no Province or Territory cut back on what is determined to be a necessary programme.