

90.8EM Reading Material, the GST and Illiteracy

[Whereas,] Rationale:[This resolution was first proposed during 1990, the International Year of Literacy.] Illiteracy and functional illiteracy continue to prevent a significant number of Canadians from participating fully in Canadian life.

In the computer age in which we find ourselves, the ability to read is more important than ever before. NCWC is concerned that raising the cost of books and other educational reading materials through the GST may have a detrimental effect on literacy programs as well as the publishing industry.

[RESOLVED,] NCWC urges the Government of Canada to:

1. Further encourage and promote programs to eliminate or combat the problems of illiteracy;
2. Ensure that the purchase cost of books and other educational reading materials are not increased through the implementation of taxation via the GST.

Comment: NCWC notes that the GST has, since January 1991, raised the cost of reading materials. It would like to know

whether any research has been done to show the effects on literacy or on the publishing industry, and whether

the government plans to reconsider the GST as applied to books in light of such research. It is interested in any

initiatives to decrease illiteracy which the government may have taken since 1990.