

May 11, 2022

Karen Vecchio , MP
Conservative Party of Canada

Dear Ms. Vecchio

Re: Abortion Rights in Canada

On behalf of the members of the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC), I want to sincerely thank you for your support of abortion rights in Canada, in particular a woman's right to choose.

While we recognize that Canada is not the United States, the concern that Roe vs Wade will be overturned by the US Supreme Court is a deep concern for women in Canada as we recognise that things can change on a dime.

The statement that “Women's Rights are Human Rights “ declared at the 1995 Beijing CSW has been reiterated by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. If we believe this statement, it must include the protection of reproduction choice and reproductive justice. This was not a new concept in 1995; women's organizations around the world had advocated for these rights for years. It was, however, a significant statement made by Hilary Clinton that rang across the world.

The Canadian Supreme Court decision to decriminalize abortion was intended to eradicate illegal abortions. As before, a return to those earlier days does not indicate in any way that this will prevent women from seeking services from those who would exploit the need. These illegal, back-alley abortions constitute violence against women and must not be tolerated under any circumstances.

It is particularly significant to our members that you spoke out when advised by the interim leader of your Party to be silent and to speak in opposition to the ideals of many of your colleagues. We applaud your courage and strength; speaking truth to power is a sign of confidence and commitment to your values.

Thank you!

Patricia Leson, President
National Council of Women of Canada

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) works in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, acknowledging Canada is the traditional territory of Indigenous and Metis People. We are grateful to join with others in peace and hope, advocating for an improved quality of life for women, children, families, and society.

Note: The original draft of this letter was prepared by Monica Cullum, NCWC Justice Convenor.