



## Ontario Provincial Council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada Legislation Standing Committee

*Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call*

**Directive #2**

**Pages: 2 (Attachments: 1)**

**January 15, 2018**

To: Diocesan Legislation Standing Committee Chairpersons  
From: Karen McDonald, Provincial Legislation Standing Committee Chairperson  
cc: Provincial Officers, Diocesan Presidents, Legislation Sub-Committee Chairpersons and National Legislation Standing Committee Chairperson

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***Happy New Year to All!***

As we embrace 2018, we welcome any new members to the legislation *team* and we thank all legislation chairpersons for their work in this committee last year. Letters were sent to the prime minister, MPs, ministers, MPPs, opposition members; petitions were signed; visits were made to MPs and MPPs offices ... doing what the Pope asked:

*"Being a Christian entails promoting the dignity of our brothers and sisters, fighting for it, living for it."*

*Homily of Pope Francis, Havana, Cuba (September 2015)*

Your dedicated service is required more than ever as this new year promises to be busy with a June election looming and many bills and acts requiring our attention.

On the Feast of the Holy Family, our priest stated that we must **live** our family values as Mary did, and not just talk about them. It is helpful for us to reflect upon the year that has passed and to recall how, as women of action, we improved the lives of those less fortunate. We do this when we challenge our politicians to include core family values (as presented in our resolutions) in their decision making.

I received a Christmas card from Rev. David Reilander of Catholic Missions in Canada with this message:

*"In the midst of turbulence, Mary and Joseph deal with their circumstances - no place available - let's use what there is. The Child is born and even visitors come. In the midst of madness, there is tranquility."*

Mary and Joseph were homeless and poor. Jesus was born in a stable with animals. An innkeeper gave them hope by offering shelter. We are today's innkeepers and our faith teaches us there is hope ... knowing this brings tranquility in challenging times.

As part of our focus on homelessness, the provincial legislation *team* is developing a

CWL *Scavenger Hunt* for councils and members to participate in. Stay tuned ...  
These lyrics from a favourite hymn of mine offer hope and tranquility.

*Silent, in the chill of midnight,  
starlight shines upon a lowly manger.  
Wonder, wonder of the ages;  
heaven breaks forth on the earth.  
For a child is born, the world rejoices!  
Shepherds and angels proclaim his birth.  
This is Jesus the Lord, our Savior and brother,  
bearing God's peace to the earth.*

*Jesus, Lord of all creation,  
sleep now close beside your mother, Mary.  
Bring us light amid the darkness,  
promise of life without end.  
For a child is born, the world rejoices!  
Shepherds and angels proclaim his birth.  
This is Jesus the Lord, our Savior and brother,  
bearing God's peace to the earth.*

*(Nativity Carol - Francis Patrick O'Brien)*

**Attached** is a list of private members' bills requiring **action** by contacting MPs, ministers, the prime minister (postage is going up but government mailing is free).  
Google legislation updates at [www.parl.ca/LegisInfo/LAAG.aspx?Language=E](http://www.parl.ca/LegisInfo/LAAG.aspx?Language=E)

National Legislation Chairperson Nancy Simms advised of two items of good news.

- With the hope that the League's voice made a difference, **Bill C-233 National Strategy for Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias Act** was passed by the Senate and House of Commons and received Royal Assent on June 22, 2017.
- On November 8, 2017, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights reversed the course of the government's efforts to repeal section 176 of the *Criminal Code* by voting to retain the provision (with amendments). Section 176 prohibits activity that obstructs or interferes with religious officials seeking to perform their religious duties. Bill C-51 will no longer attempt to remove protections in law for clergy and worship services.

**Election day in Ontario is June 7, 2018.** Begin now to determine who the candidates are in your area and think of issues important to you. Then ask questions. The legislature may have adjourned until February 20, 2018 but we cannot afford to.

Lots of love,

*Karen*

## **"EYE ON LEGISLATION"**

The following private members' bills (current status) were brought to our attention by National Legislation Chairperson Nancy Simms.

*\*\* We are **not** expected to take action on all of these bills ... pick one or two of interest. As Nancy states, "There is so much important work taking place in Parliament that creates an abundance of information to share. Don't get overwhelmed." \*\**

**Bill C-254 An Act to amend the Excise Tax Act** (baby products) is in first reading in the House of Commons. Members are asked to contact government officials to request support for the bill especially with adoption of **Resolution 2017.03 Zero-Rated Status Under the Goods and Services Tax Provisions of the Excise Tax Act for Child Safety Products**.

**Bill C-282 An Act to amend the Excise Tax Act and the Income Tax Act** (extra-energy-efficient products); **Bill C-283 An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999** (electronic products recycling program); and **Bill C-287 An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999** (nanotechnology) are all in first reading in the House of Commons and support **Resolution 2006.04 Renewable Energy** and other League resolutions seeking to protect the environment.

**Bill C-313 National Strategy on Advertising to Children Act** is in first reading and supports communications resolutions seeking protection in media for children and families.

**Bill C-249 An Act to amend the Public Health Agency of Canada Act** (National Alzheimer Office) is in first reading in the House of Commons and proposes the establishment of a national Alzheimer Office within the Public Health Agency of Canada. This would support the League's ongoing call for compassionate care for the sick.

**Bill C-350 An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act** (trafficking and transplanting human organs and other body parts) is in first reading in the House of Commons and supports the League's human trafficking resolutions.

*The following bills changed status:*

**Bill C-211 Federal Framework on Post-traumatic Stress Disorder Act** is in second reading in the Senate.

**Bill C-277 Framework on Palliative Care in Canada Act** received Royal Assent on December 12, 2017.

**Bill C-243 National Maternity Assistance Program Strategy Act** passed the House of Commons with amendments and has had first reading in the Senate.

**Bill S-228 Child Health Protection Act** passed third reading in the Senate and is in second reading in the House of Commons.

**Bill S-225 An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act** (substances used in production of fentanyl) was passed by the Senate with amendment at third reading.

**Bill S-5 An Act to amend the Tobacco Act and the Non-smokers' Health Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts** was passed by the Senate with an amendment and is in second reading in the House of Commons.