



Canadian Federation of University Women
ONTARIO COUNCIL



Ontario Council Response To the Re-introduction of the Great Lakes Protection Act

March 2015

Submitted by
Brenda Robertson
President, Ontario Council
Canadian Federation of University Women
cfuwontario@yahoo.com
www.cfuwontcouncil.ca

Researched and Written by
Ontario Council Policy Advisor
Carolyn Day

EBR: Great Lakes Protection Act (GLPA)

The Ontario Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women appreciates the opportunity to respond to the EBR posting of the Great Lakes Protection Act (GLPA).

CFUW Ontario Council is very pleased to see the GLPA reintroduced to the legislature. We are especially pleased to note changes to the Bill that reflect some of the comments from previous consultations. The Great Lakes, as the GLPA so clearly states, are a vital, vulnerable and irreplaceable resource for all of Ontario – a resource that has been placed under stress for far too many years. It is time for Ontario to take strong action to protect this precious heritage and we urge the government to make the GLPA a priority in its legislative agenda and to enact its speedy passage.

CFUW Ontario Council strongly supports Section 6 outlining the Great Lakes Strategy – especially the strong Principles listed in 6.4. We also support the stronger provisions included in Sections 7 and 8 for Monitoring and Reporting progress on action to protect the lakes.

We support the establishment of Targets in Section 9 – with the priorities of algae bloom and wetland preservation set out as top priorities. We are somewhat concerned that other potential Targets are governed by the words: “may set” rather than “shall set”. It is important that the momentum for protection not be lost through the years and under changes of governments.

CFUW Ontario Council recommends that, in order to be consistent and continue this sense of priority and urgency, Section 12.1 be amended by adding Section 12.1.vi, to read:

vi. The proposed timeline for action to be undertaken to achieve this initiative.

CFUW Ontario Council strongly supports the establishment of the strong, wide-ranging precedence given to the GLPA and the rules for conformity to the Act as delineated in Sections 20 – 26, with the critical criterion in case of conflict being “the provision that provides the greatest protection to the ecological health of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin prevails”.

It is important to see in Section 19.2 a requirement for plans for financing initiatives included in the legislation and a requirement for a specific date to be set for commencement of the initiatives.

We strongly support in Sections 26.6 – 26.11, the specific offences against the Act clearly delineated and the consequent penalties clearly set out.

All of the above reinforces the government’s determination that the protection of our Great Lakes is a priority and gives a sense of urgency to act on this determination, and we applaud the government’s strong action through the GLPA to make this happen.

CFUW Ontario Council is composed of 54 clubs within Ontario, comprised of members living in urban and rural areas across Ontario. We are non-partisan, nonsectarian, a voluntary, self-funded, non-governmental organization. Our members are active in public affairs, advocating on public

education, justice, health and environmental issues as well as the status of women and human rights. Ontario Council is part of the Canadian Federation of University Women which is the largest affiliate of the International Federation of University Women.

Sincerely

Brenda Robertson

President Ontario Council

Canadian Federation of University Women

www.cfuwontcouncil.ca

president@cfuwontcouncil.ca

brenda.r@sympatico.ca