

JOAN MACALPINE-STILES APPOINTED MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STATUS OF WOMEN



On February 14, 2006, Ms. MacAlpine-Stiles was appointed Minister responsible for the Status of Women. She was also reappointed Minister of Tourism and Parks.

On March 16, 2006, seven members of the Coalition for Pay Equity, accompanied by the Coordinator, Johanne Perron, held a first meeting with Ms. MacAlpine-Stiles to discuss their respective vision of the Wage Gap Action Plan and how to promote pay equity. Norma Dubé, Assistant Deputy Minister for Women's Issues, gave a report on the evolution of the action plan.

Ms. MacAlpine-Stiles entered politics in 1992, when she was elected to Moncton City Council. She was reelected in 1995 and 1998. She was elected to the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick for the first time on June 7, 1999, as MLA for Moncton South, and was sworn in as Minister for Municipalities on June 21, 1999. On March 23, 2000, she was appointed Minister of Business New Brunswick. She was later appointed Minister of Family and Community Services.

THE COALITION FOR PAY EQUITY MEETS THE LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY

On March 21, the chairperson, the coordinator and six members of the Coalition for Pay Equity met with Liberal Party leader Shawn Graham to find out exactly what his party's commitment is to a law on pay equity.



The meeting provided an opportunity for a good dialogue. The Coalition emphasized the need to pass a law applicable to both the public and the private sectors and urged the Liberal Party leader to put pay equity legislation on his next electoral platform.

During the last election campaign, the Liberal Party promised to adopt a Pay Equity Act for the civil service and to bring together all the stakeholders in order to legislate the extension of pay equity to the private sector. However, on December 23, 2005, the Liberal members of the Law Reform Committee did an about-face and voted for the report recommending voluntary measures for a five-year period.

From left to right: Marilyn MacCormack, Joan Kingston (liberal political analyst), Shawn Graham and Marylea MacDonald. Were also present: Anne-Marie Gammon, Elizabeth Coburn, Christine Chamberlain and Johanne Perron

PAY EQUITY: 10 VOLUNTARY MEASURES FOR EMPLOYEES!

This year, the Coalition for Pay Equity marked International Women's Day with humour, responding to the Wage Gap Action Plan by proposing "voluntary measures for employees" (see the box below).

"International Women's Day is a chance to have fun and to celebrate, while pointing out women's accomplishments and what they still need to do to reach equality," explained Anne-Marie Gammon, chairperson of the Coalition for Pay Equity.

"After this time of celebration and reflection, we will take up the reins again! We want to make sure that pay equity is in the forefront during the next provincial elections," said Anne-Marie Gammon. "The next election campaign will be our chance to get a firm commitment from the political parties."

10 VOLUNTARY MEASURES FOR PAY EQUITY

*** For the exclusive use by employees ***

The hourly pay gap between NB men and women currently stands at 14.3%. Most of this gap (about 80% of the 14.3%) is due to discrimination. So, because of DISCRIMINATION, women earn 88.6 of what men earn per hour. It is as though women don't get paid for their work from November 20 to December 31 every year.

So, given the government's slowness, women must take matters into their own hands, once more... Here are our ten voluntary measures for employees.

1. Give a strong message to your employer next Christmas: offer him or her a good novel... but only after tearing out the last chapter's pages.
2. Save 12% of your child care expenses: bring your children to your employer on Friday afternoons and pick them back up at the end of the day. Imagine the impact if all your colleagues do it!
3. Send a post card to your employer on November 20, announcing you will only come back to work on January 2nd. Or take all your Friday afternoons off.
4. Only do 88% of your work. For instance, "forget" 12% of the information you receive: "Oh! By the way, someone absolutely wanted to talk to you before 2pm to place a \$10 000 order, but I forgot her name..." If you write a text, only do 88% of it and tell your employer to write the rest. If you make a bed, don't put the pillows! If you make soup, leave the vegetables whole!
5. Wear a moustache to work – you never know!
6. Place a sign on the front lawn of the building where you work with the following words: "This Company treats women like slaves from November 20 to December 31, every year."
7. Place an ad in the newspaper announcing that the company where you are working is on sale for 88% of its worth.
8. You are studying in a traditionally women's field? Only pay 88% of the tuition fees!
9. Only pay 88% of your income tax – if it's OK for employers to pay women only 88% of their work's value, it should be the same for women when it comes to income!
10. Organize a press conference and announce that the Premier will personally give \$80,000 to every woman to compensate for lost income throughout their career and at their retirement due to discrimination ... and to his inaction. Then, join the line up in front of his residence.

If nothing else works, send letters and emails to your MLA. Meet her or him. We want them to spend 88% of their time on pay equity until we get legislation. And most importantly, since elections might be coming, why not vote for a party that promises pay equity legislation for both the public and private sectors?

Provincial Election



The Coalition for Pay Equity is getting ready for a possible provincial election as early as this spring. It is identifying persons ready to meet with the candidates of each party in their riding. To support these persons, the Coalition is preparing a guide to lobbying and will soon offer training across the province to interested persons. If you would like to participate in this lobbying effort, contact the Coordinator of the Coalition, Johanne Perron, at 855-0002 or by e-mail at coalitio@nb.sympatico.ca.

Pay equity at the pre-budget consultations

Members of the Coalition spoke on pay equity at regional pre-budget consultations. They emphasized pay inequity as a factor in poverty and the advantages of pay equity for provincial coffers. It remains to be seen whether their words fell on attentive ears when the budget comes down on March 28!

Five for five

Premier Lord presented five objectives to be reached in five years, notably the reduction of poverty. He announced that he will be organizing regional consultations and a provincial forum on the subject. That would be a perfect opportunity to talk about pay equity! Stay tuned...



New member organizations!

The Coalition of Concerned Citizens, Unions and Business and the *Cercle des femmes acadiennes et francophones de Cocagne* have just joined the Coalition for Pay Equity.

We now have 57 member organizations.

What did she say?

"Since N.B. brags about having the lowest Corporate tax in the country then the Businesses should be able to pay their employees a decent equitable wage." Jackie Matthews, Coordinator of the Coalition of Transition Houses and member of the Coalition's Board of directors, at the pre-budget consultation in Saint John.

Myths and realities of pay equity

Coming issues of the Coalition's *Newsletter* will present the myths and realities surrounding pay equity. We will unmask one myth in each new issue of the *Newsletter*.

Myth: The government shouldn't interfere in the economy. The law of supply and demand should determine wages.

Reality: The government has a real duty to interfere. It already interferes in the economy. For instance, in its role of protecting citizens, it legislates on labour standards, workplace health and safety and other areas.

The government also interferes by subsidizing industries. Why should it let market laws prevail when they violate the rights of half of workers? By not interfering, the government sanctions exploitation of women's work and discrimination on the basis of sex.

CALENDAR

May 1 and 2, 2006

Quebec City

Conference entitled "*La discrimination en emploi : quels moyens faut-il prendre?*"

For more details, go to www.rlt.ulaval.ca/congres.

May 25, 2006, lunch time

Fredericton

Rally for pay equity, organized by the New Brunswick Federation of Labour.

IMPORTANT CHANGE!

May 27, 2006

Bathurst (Atlantic Host)

Please note that the Coalition has rescheduled its AGM. It was originally planned for June 3, 2006.

September 22 to 24, 2006

Bathurst

États généraux des femmes en Acadie du N.-B. The theme of the event is "*Oser voir l'avenir différemment*". This conference is organized by the *Fédération des femmes acadiennes et francophones du N.-B.* with the support of an organizing committee representing various women's groups, including the Coalition for Pay Equity.

HAVE THE COALITION VISIT YOUR ORGANIZATION

The Coalition for Pay Equity offers you the opportunity to welcome a speaker to give a status report on pay equity in New Brunswick to your organization, community college or university. These presentations will give you the arguments you need to better support pay equity. Just call the Coordinator of the Coalition for Pay Equity, Johanne Perron, at 855-0002, or e-mail her at coalitio@nb.sympatico.ca

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Distribute the *Newsletter* to your friends and invite them to subscribe to our *Newsletter* mailing list by e-mailing coalitio@nb.sympatico.ca.

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