

Statement on Budget 2024

CFUW-FCFDU welcomes the many investments announced in Budget 2024 that will improve the lives of women, girls, and gender-diverse people and advance gender equality.

In July 2023, CFUW-FCFDU submitted a [written submission](#) for pre-budget consultations in advance of the 2024 Federal Budget. Our recommendations included:

- Implement Bill C-226 to address environmental justice and racism.
- Publish and implement Canada's Feminist Foreign Policy.
- Declare gender-based violence an epidemic across Canada.
- Increase efforts on spending, funding, and implementing promises on the 231 calls for justice for MMIWG2S+.
- Work with provinces to make "age-friendly communities" the standard across Canada.
- Increase federal support for opportunities for women to work in the skilled trades and non-traditional work.

While we are disappointed by the ongoing lack of progress in some priority areas—including on environmental racism and the Feminist Foreign Policy—there are several ambitious announcements in this year's Budget that advance long-held policy goals of CFUW-FCFDU. In particular, we celebrate the following:

- The **Child Care Expansion Loan Program**, which will deliver a much-needed increase in child care spaces by providing \$1 billion in low-cost loans and \$60 million in grants to public and not-for-profit child care providers.
- A **Sectoral Table on the Care Economy** to consult the government, including on the development of a **National Caregiving Strategy**. The Sectoral Table is a promising opportunity for progress in better supporting under-appreciated paid and unpaid care workers—many of whom are women, and racialized women in particular. We anticipate that these carers will guide the development of the Strategy, and that its recommendations will be implemented as swiftly as possible.
- \$351.2 million in 2025-26 for the **Youth Employment and Skills Strategy**, including well-paying summer job opportunities in sectors facing critical labour shortages, such as housing construction. We sincerely hope this strategy includes targeted opportunities for girls and women to work in skilled trades and non-traditional work.
- An additional \$350 million over two years, beginning in 2024-25, for **international humanitarian assistance**. In light of the growing number of crises and conflicts inflicting grave harm on civilians around the world, this additional funding is sorely needed. We hope to also see increased investment in women's capacity to participate in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and post-conflict reconstruction, in line with Canada's commitment to the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda.
- A further \$1.3 million over three years to co-develop a regional **Red Dress Alert system** with Indigenous partners, which would notify the public when an Indigenous woman, girl, or two-spirit person goes missing. This is a crucial step to address the national crisis of MMIWG2S+, but significantly more funding and action is required to implement the National Inquiry's 231 Calls for Justice.
- \$30.4 million over two years to support the **buyback of assault-style firearms**, which will increase women's safety, particularly in situations of gender-based and intimate partner violence.

While the Red Dress Alert and the assault-style firearms buyback programs are both key steps in addressing gender-based violence (GBV) in Canada, we join other feminist organizations in regretting the Budget's lack of funding for the GBV sector. The epidemic-level core funding for GBV prevention and interventions recommended in the Final Report of the Mass Casualty Commission is markedly absent.

Lastly, Budget 2024 rightly focuses on providing a fairer future for Canada's younger generations, who have been especially impacted by the intersecting crises of the pandemic, the cost of living, and climate change. In 2024, we hope to also see the federal government pay particular attention to another age group that has disproportionately suffered: older people.

CFUW-FCFDU welcomes the announcement that the government will introduce a **Safe Long Term Care Act** to support new national long-term care standards. We urge this Act to be accompanied by significant funding for accessible, affordable, equitable, high-quality long-term care, with an emphasis on the at-home and in-community care that Canadian older people desire.

About CFUW-FCFDU

CFUW-FCFDU is a non-partisan, self-funded organization with 94 clubs across Canada and over 6,600 members. Since the founding of CFUW-FCFDU in 1919, our mission has been to achieve educational and economic equality and social justice through continuous learning and empowerment. Our vision is that women and girls are educated and empowered to make transformative change in the world. For more information, please contact CFUW-FCFDU's National Advocacy and Policy Specialist at advocacy@cfuw-fcfdu.ca