

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF CANADA

May 5, 2008

Dear Prime Minister Harper,

The National Council of Women of Canada commends you and your Minister of Environment, the Honourable John Baird, for acknowledging that Canadians want to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). Measures such as the tax credits for public transit and requiring higher standards for vehicle emissions are welcome starts but we feel these efforts should be part of a concerted effort and extend more quickly and further across other sectors.

We are not alone in deploring Canada's ranking in the top ten largest carbon dioxide emitters and our country's abysmal ranking at #53 out of 56 countries in the 2008 Climate Change Performance Index, down from #51 in 2007 (Germanwatch, Climate Change Performance Index). Recently, the Government's negative response to the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy raises the question, if the Government is not prepared to adopt the NRTEE's recommendations, what actions will Canada's Government take to achieve timely comparable GHG reductions.

The Government's document, Turning the Corner: An Action Plan to Reduce Greenhouse Gases and Air Pollution (April 26 2007), lacks caps on industrial emissions and has too many loopholes to achieve results. The Pembina Institute's analysis (May 28 2007) of the Government's Plan points to other weaknesses in the Plan.

We urge the Government of Canada to adopt a more vigorous, comprehensive, and scientifically-based plan with national targets to achieve effective GHG emission reductions in all sectors in a much more timely manner. Jurisdictions such as British Columbia, the European Union, and California are gaining kudos for proceeding with more ambitious and bolder plans to prevent climate change.

We urge strong federal government leadership to show real commitment and make Canada a leader in the reduction of Greenhouse Gases.

Sincerely,

Karen Dempsey, NCWC President

[Text prepared by Elisabeth Fleming, Environment Convenor]