



Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies™
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28 January 2019

Honourable Ralph Goodale,
Minister of Public Safety
269 Laurier West
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0P8

Re: Request for Women's Stakeholder roundtable on bill C-83

Dear Minister Goodale,

The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies appreciates all opportunities to provide our expertise and experience to the Correctional Service of Canada through consultations and meetings. The stakeholder roundtable hosted by CSC regarding Bill C-83 on January 17, 2019, presented one such opportunity. While we were grateful to be gathered with representatives from organizations across Canada to learn more about and discuss CSC's plans for implementing Bill C-83, we were struck by the absence of women-specific considerations. The absence of the Deputy Commissioner for Women is telling in this regard. We had hoped that CSC would be able to respond substantively to our questions and remarks about the Bill's impact on women's corrections. Unfortunately, much of the responses we received were set in the context of men's prisons.

The Correctional Service of Canada is expected and purports to have a separate and distinct approach to incarcerated women in Canada. This is well documented in the CSC's publications, including *Creating Choices* and *Gender Responsive Corrections for Women in Canada: The Road to Success Reintegration Strategy*. In light of the Correctional Investigator's reporting on the erosion of the principles of *Creating Choices* and the Prime Minister's recent affirmation that these principles remain as relevant as ever, we are concerned that CSC has not yet dedicated time and resources to applying a gender-lens to these potential legislative changes. In fact, In December 2018, after hearing from the Correctional Investigator and other stakeholders on Bill C-83, the Standing Committee on Public Safety recommended CSC take a different approach to segregation for women prisoners.

In keeping with Canada's commitment to substantive equality, we would like to recommend that Public Safety request Commissioner Kelly to assemble expert individuals and organizations representative of women's needs to continue CSC's stakeholder engagement process. On January 17th we were informed that an implementation team has been established to begin the process of applying bill C-83 to the prisons. It would be negligent and reprehensible not to incorporate the knowledge, research, and experience of stakeholders working in women's issues as part of the implementation process.

Due to the unique impacts that Bill C-83 will have on women prisoners, it is critical that CSC develop a strategy specific to women.

Sincerely,

Kassandra Churcher
Executive Director, Canadian Association of Elizabeth
Fry Societies

In partnership with,

Native Women's Association of Canada
National Association of Women and the Law
DisAbled Women's Network Canada

cc. Anne Kelly, Commissioner of the Correctional Service of Canada
Dr. Kelley Blanchette, Deputy Commissioner for Women, CSC
Dr. Ivan Zinger, Office of the Correctional Investigator
The Honourable Maryam Monsef, Minister of Status of Women
Lynne Groulx, NWAC
Suki Beavers, NAWL
Bonnie L. Brayton, DAWN
Dr. Diana Majury, President of CAEFS
Savannah Gentile, Director of Advocacy and Legal Issues, CAEFS