

## Political Action Campaign: a Law for the Private Sector! Provincial Election 2018

The **New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity** is a group of individuals and organizations that educates and advocates for the adoption and the implementation of legislation to achieve pay equity for all workers in both the public and private sectors. Founded in 2001, the Coalition now has more than **800 individual members** and **90 member organizations**.

### THE LOBBYING CAMPAIGN

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#### OUR OBJECTIVES

**To have a pay equity law for the private sector by 2020.** In order to accomplish this, all provincial political parties must include a commitment to pass this law in their platform for the next election.

- » To obtain a pay equity law for the private sector by 2020.
- » To have all political parties include the adoption of a pay equity law for the private sector in their platform for the 2018 election.

#### PROPOSED ACTIONS

**Our aim is to meet with all candidates to ask them to support pay equity legislation.** New Brunswick's next provincial election will be held on **September 24, 2018**. We must talk with our MLAs now as political parties are developing their campaign platforms over the next few months. This guide will prepare you for effective political action.

- » Preparing for a meeting with your MLA
- » A meeting outline and talking points
- » Following-up on a meeting
- » How to answer difficult questions (Appendix 1)

The most effective way to state your concerns is **speaking to your local MLA in person**. They have to be accountable to you. Grassroots advocacy works through a local strategy targeting individual MLAs.

**DO NOT** switch to another MLA if yours already supports pay equity legislation for the private sector.

**DO** use these guidelines to praise them because it will ensure they continue doing the right thing.

**Preparing for a meeting with your MLA.** Before arranging a meeting, gather useful information.

- » Find your MLA's official website and office contact information at <https://goo.gl/nAzO5i>
- » Sign up on your MLA's website to receive email updates and invitations to local events.
- » Find out where your MLA stands on the issue of pay equity.

**Local advocacy tactics that work.** Remember to prepare questions ahead of time, coordinate with your group, and report back on social media.

### PREPARATION

**Contact your MLA's constituency office to set a date, time and place for the meeting.** If possible, confirm the details of the meeting by email before it takes place.

- » Introduce yourself, say you represent the New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity and state the topic of the meeting: pay equity. *If they refer you to the Women's Equality Minister, explain that you live in their riding and want to talk to your own MLA.*
- » Give your contact information in case the meeting date and time change.

**Review the documents** you will be using and inform yourself on your MLA's biography and position. Determine who will attend the meeting. A small group of 2 or 3 people is ideal.

### THE MEETING

**This is a basic outline for your meeting with an MLA.** You may not follow this plan but make sure you do not wander off topic. Maintain a positive tone and atmosphere.

**Start on a positive note.** For instance, you can tell Liberal MLAs that you are encouraged by the progress made on pay equity in the public sector.

**Define what pay equity is.** *Don't assume they already know, even if they claim to.* See the **Meeting Outline**. **Ask your MLA the following questions:**

- » Are you, personally, in favour of a pay equity law for the private sector?
- » Is your party committed to adopting pay equity legislation for the private sector by 2020?
- » Do you have any questions? (Refer to Appendix I for answers to questions)

**Leave the *Info Sheet* with your MLA.** Share a personal story on how you're personally impacted, or a friend or family member. Get their business card and send them a follow-up email.

*If they do not agree with your position, ask them why not. Use the answers in Appendix 1 if you need help answering questions. Ask what information could change their opinion.*

**Be polite** when presenting your argument but don't be afraid to insist.

**Summarize your MLA's position** at the end of the meeting and thank them for meeting with you.

**Thank the MLA** and leave them with the information package and our brochure.

### AFTER THE MEETING

**Fill out a Report on the Meeting or call us at (506) 855-0002.** A copy of the report is included in this kit and you may send it to the office of the Coalition by mail or email.

**Communicate on social media.** Talk about your meeting on social media and share pictures. This is an opportunity to engage with local media over social media. *Be polite as members and/or representatives of the Coalition. Personal attacks and insults halt a conversation.*

### TOWN HALL MEETINGS AND OTHER PUBLIC EVENTS

**Find out when is your MLA's next public town hall meeting.** In the summer, community BBQs. Send out a notice to your group and meet ahead of time. *Signs can be useful to reinforce your message, but you may not be given the chance to ask a question if you're holding an oppositional sign.*

- » **Distribute handouts** of questions. Head in venue early to **sit in front.**
- » **Stick with prepared questions** and be persistent. *Record everything and share it with us!*
- » **Reach out to the media afterwards.** Offer to speak about your concerns. When the event is over, engage with local media over social media. Share everything on social media.

### COORDINATED CALLS

**Calling your MLA can also have an impact.** If you are unable to meet them face-to-face, you can call their local office.

- » **Ask a single question per call.** Keep it simple. Take notes on everything they tell you.
- » **Find out who you are talking to.** If you are unable to reach your MLA, a legislative staffer who covers the issue can listen to your concern and bridge the gap between you and your MLA.
- » **If you're directed to voicemail, send them an email.**

**Tag your MLA** on social media and **follow them.**

**Speak to them in public spaces**, such as the supermarket. Public figures expect to be approached in public, and oftentimes they go in public in order to speak to their constituents.

**You can expand your reach to other MLAs in your region** if time allows. Keep in mind that some MLAs will be primarily be interested in people from their own ridings.



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Here is a suggested basic outline and talking points for your meeting with an MLA. You don't have to follow it but make sure you don't go off subject.

**Introduce yourselves** and thank your MLA for meeting with you.

**Remind your MLA what pay equity is.** Do not assume they know what it is, even if they claim to.

- » Pay equity is “equal pay for work of equal value.”
- » Pay equity is **different from wage parity**. Wage parity is equal pay for the same work.
- » The goal of pay equity is to **recognize the value of work traditionally done by women**.
- » NB already has a law for the public sector: the *Pay Equity Act, 2009*. We need a **pay equity law for the private sector**, where **70%** of the women in the province work.
- » Pay equity is a **human right**. We cannot treat women (private sector) as second class citizens.

**Questions to ask your MLA:**

*If you know your MLA has already spoken favorably about pay equity, congratulate them.*

- » Do you believe pay inequity is a problem? Why or why not?
- » Are you, personally, in favour of a pay equity law for the private sector? If not, why not?
- » Is your party committed to adopting a pay equity law for the private sector by 2020?
- » If it is, what are the obstacles since a law has yet to be adopted?
- » What are you willing to do to move this issue forward?
- » Do you have any questions?

*If you don't know the answer, get more information and get back to them later.*

**At the end of the discussion**, thank your MLA and leave them with the following documents:

- » Our brochure
- » Pay Equity: Information Package

If your MLA asks an insensitive question, you can ask them if you can **post it on social media**.

**Follow-up with your MLA.** Follow them on social media. Send them questions or articles you come across to keep pay equity at the forefront of their agenda.

## Appendix 1. RESPONDING TO DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

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***“I support pay equity: a man and a woman who do the same job should earn the same salary!”***

This person is not making a distinction between “pay parity” and “pay equity.” Correct them politely but quickly! Do not hesitate to repeat your explanation if necessary.

***“Women choose to work in low-paying jobs. We should encourage them to go into non-traditional trades and jobs instead that pay more.”***

Women should have the same opportunity as men and should be able to choose the jobs they really want. We welcome measures that make that possible.

Approximately 65% of women in the work force have jobs that have been traditionally female jobs, and workers (men and women) are underpaid and undervalued. They need pay equity.

These jobs are essential to the wellbeing of our society and the performance of businesses. If women leave for better paying fields, who will replace them? Who will care for children and seniors?

***“Pay equity laws in Ontario/Ontario didn't work. Their wage gap is bigger than ours.”***

The wage gap is the result of several different factors, like education and seniority. Women often have less seniority than men, because of the years they stayed home to raise their children or care for other dependents.

Even if there is a wage gap, women in Québec/Ontario have benefited from pay equity legislation.

The commission in Québec reported that in December 2015, 84% of had completed their pay equity process. According to a survey conducted in Québec in 2006, 82% of employers who started a pay equity process did it because of the law.

***“I support pay equity and I encourage private businesses to make pay equity evaluations.”***

Thank you! However, it has been proven that voluntary measure don't work. We need legislations.

Education wasn't enough to reduce drinking and driving; it took legislation. The same goes for pay equity! The New Brunswick government has been encouraging private employers to implement pay equity programs on a voluntary basis since 2005, but with no tangible results so far.

In Quebec, 82% of employers who implemented pay equity programs admitted they only did so because of the provincial *Pay Equity Act*.

***“A pay equity law would put a strain on employers and businesses.”***

Unfair wages puts a strain on employees! The cost of pay equity for businesses is the cost of inequity for women. Employers have always used this argument. Had we listened to them, we wouldn't have minimum wage, labour standards, maternity leave, or workplace safety laws.

If capacity to pay is a valid excuse for businesses not to pay predominantly female jobs properly, why can't women use the same excuse to pay less for what they buy?

None of the Quebec and Ontario businesses that implemented pay equity programs failed.

You can find more examples of common **Myths and Realities** on our website, and how to dispel them:

[equite-equity.com/myths\\_realities.cfm](http://equite-equity.com/myths_realities.cfm)



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## Political Action Campaign: a Law for the Private Sector!

### Info sheet: Pay Equity by the Numbers

**Pay equity is equal pay for work of equal or comparable value.** It compares the value of female-dominated jobs to the value of male-dominated jobs performed for the same employer based on four factors: **skill, effort, responsibility** and **working conditions**.

Male-dominated jobs		Female-dominated jobs
Cable technician: <b>\$24.77</b>	vs	Child care educator: <b>\$12.28</b>
Truck driver: <b>\$19.47</b>	vs	Home Support Worker: <b>\$13.40</b>

### PAY EQUITY IS A HUMAN RIGHT

**Pay equity is an internationally recognized human right.** Without adequate legislative measures, women and men who work in female-dominated jobs, which are generally undervalued and underpaid, won't receive pay equity.

#### ***Pay inequity costs women.***

Many female-dominated jobs pay low salaries. In 2015, New Brunswick women earned on average 88.8% of what men earned per hour.

**56%** women working in 5 c's: caring, clerical, catering, cashiering, and cleaning

#### ***Pay inequity costs families.***

Lower wages for either parent affects family income. Men who work in traditionally female jobs often receive unfair wages. It can mean the difference between poverty and security.

**14.4%** women living in poverty

#### ***Pay inequity costs the province.***

In eliminating the wage discrimination against women and increasing female participation in the workforce, Canada could see a \$105-billion in GDP growth; New Brunswick could add 1.6% to GDP growth. *Pay equity would improve profitability, workplace culture and the economy.*

**11.2%** the hourly gender wage gap in New Brunswick in 2015

### THE PRIVATE SECTOR

**70%** of women work in the private sector. No pay equity law in NB exists for the private sector.

New Brunswick's *Five-Year Wage Gap Action Plan, 2005-2010*, proposed voluntary measures for employers to achieve pay equity, but it did not bring about tangible results. We need a pay equity law to cover the private sector.

Equitable wages would greatly benefit the province in measurable ways.

- » Beneficial for families and for the economies where New Brunswickers live and work
- » Enables employers to attract and retain good employees and improve labour relations
- » Improves employees' health status and quality of life, since income is a health determinant, leading to savings for the provincial government



**Political Action Campaign: a Law for the Private Sector!**  
**Provincial Election 2018**  
**Meeting Report**

Name of the Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA): \_\_\_\_\_

Riding: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the MLA's assistant: \_\_\_\_\_

People attending the meeting:

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1. Did your MLA understand the concept of pay equity? OUI NON

2. Is your MLA in favour of a law for the private sector? OUI NON

Comments : \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Did your MLA make any suggestions or mention any concerns? OUI NON

If yes, explain the comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Did the MLA ask for more information? If so, what information?

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5. Do you have any other concerns about the meeting you would like to share?

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**Please send your report by email to: [info@equite-equity.com](mailto:info@equite-equity.com) or by regular mail to:  
Pay Equity Coalition, 236 St-George Street, Moncton, NB E1C 1W1  
Telephone: (506) 850-0002**

**Thank you!**