

July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008

## Reject Bill C-484 – Protect women's choice and equality

Last March, Bill C-484, the Unborn Victims of Crime Act, passed second reading in the House of Commons. This bill seeks to amend the *Criminal Code* and to create a separate offence for causing the injury or death of an "unborn child" should a pregnant woman be the victim of a crime. Although defenders of this bill claim they want to better protect pregnant women against violence, what is really at stake here is the legal recognition of the fetus' right to life and the possible re-criminalization of abortion.

The adoption of Bill C-484 would introduce a huge change in our law that could result in massive intrusions in the lives of pregnant women, as has been the case in the states in the U.S. that have adopted similar legislation.

Last January, we celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Morgentaler decision that struck down the *Criminal Code* provisions that made abortion a crime in Canada. This historic Supreme Court decision recognized that women's constitutional rights to security of the person, autonomy and freedom include the right to end an unwanted pregnancy without state interference. We must now take action to protect this right.

The fact that Bill C-484 received second reading in the House of Commons is cause for great concern. The Bill has now been referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights. After hearing presentations from groups and individuals, the Committee will determine whether the Bill should be sent to the House of Commons for a final vote. The

Senate will consider Bill C-484 if it is adopted at third reading.

This is why it's important that we take a stand now to defend women's reproductive rights. This is a question that goes to the heart of women's equality, dignity and human rights. To help fight Bill C-484, CUPW has donated \$3,000 to the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada (ARCC) and will work on the coalition of organizations fighting this Bill.

Take action now:

- Read more about this Bill – [www.arcc-cdac.ca/c484.htm](http://www.arcc-cdac.ca/c484.htm)
- Sign ARCC's petition – [www.gopetition.com/petitions/oppose-bill-c-484.html](http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/oppose-bill-c-484.html)
- Send a letter to your MP – [www.arcc-cdac.ca/action/unborn-victims-sample-letter.htm](http://www.arcc-cdac.ca/action/unborn-victims-sample-letter.htm)

We will continue to send you updates about this Bill in the coming months. CUPW believes women have the right to make their own decisions about their bodies. We believe the government should work to combat violence against women – but without putting the right to choose at stake.

In Solidarity,



Lynn Bue  
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