



House of Commons
CANADA

Standing Committee on the Status of Women

FEWO • NUMBER 035 • 2nd SESSION • 40th PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Thursday, October 22, 2009

—
Chair

The Honourable Hedy Fry

Standing Committee on the Status of Women

Thursday, October 22, 2009

•(1535)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.)): I call this meeting to order.

We are dealing today, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), with a study on increasing the participation of women in non-traditional occupations.

Today as witnesses we have the Public Service Alliance of Canada, with Patty Ducharme, national executive vice-president, executive office; and Allison Pilon, human rights and employment. We also have the Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology, Hiromi Matsui. I want to thank you for coming and welcome you.

By now, Ms. Ducharme, you should know the rules extremely well: ten minutes for presentation, and then we will have a question and answer period. So, Patty, will you be presenting, or will you share your time?

Ms. Patty Ducharme (National Executive Vice-President, Executive Office, Public Service Alliance of Canada): I will be presenting.

The Chair: Good. Thank you. So the floor is for Ms. Ducharme.

Ms. Patty Ducharme: Thank you.

Thank you, honourable members of the committee, for inviting us to come today. I am joined by Allison Pilon, who is a colleague who works in our programs section as one of our employment equity officers at the PSAC.

As most of you know, the PSAC represents approximately 175,000 workers who work everywhere across Canada. Our members work in federal departments and agencies, museums, airports, and in the para-public and private sectors. Approximately 62% of our members are women, and our members, men and women, work in a host of different types of work, everything from clerical and administrative work to technical, trades, science, and so on.

The PSAC has been engaged in the struggle for economic and social justice for our members and all workers for many years. Pay equity, in our opinion, is essential to the full equality of women in our society and ensures that female-dominated jobs, which have historically been undervalued, are paid equally with male-dominated work of equal value. Another essential piece of the struggle for women's economic and social equality is ensuring that women have access to areas of employment outside of what are seen as traditional

female jobs, to have the ability to explore their skills and talents, and to overcome the gender segregation still embedded in the labour market.

The labour market in Canada is in many ways segregated along gender lines. Although women make up about half the workforce in Canada, they are more likely than men to work part-time or in other forms of precarious work. About 40% of working women are in part-time, contract, or other non-standard work arrangements, compared with fewer than 30% of men. Of those women who do work part-time, the majority do so out of necessity. Only 28% of women who work part-time choose to do so out of personal preference. Most have to do so because they cannot find full-time work, because they are in school, or are caring for their children or aging parents and don't have access to adequate child care or family services.

The situation is more pronounced for racialized and immigrant women, aboriginal women, and women with disabilities. Racialized women are more likely to be working in the low-wage service sector and in part-time work. Many immigrant women are underemployed and are unable to work in the field in which they were trained and they are also more likely to work part-time. Aboriginal women have among the highest unemployment rate in Canada and are employed mainly in lower-paying service sector jobs. Women with disabilities are often unemployed or underemployed because so many workplaces remain inaccessible. More than two-thirds of women work in occupations traditionally held by women, such as nursing, teaching, clerical, and sales positions, and although women have made significant gains over the past few decades, in many areas we are still largely excluded from blue-collar jobs, skilled trades, and professions such as sciences and engineering. As of 2006, women represented only 21% of those employed in primary occupations, 6.5% of those employed in trades, transport, and construction, and only 31% of those in processing, manufacturing, and utilities.

Turning to the federal public service, where most of our members work, a number of jobs and occupational categories remain male-dominated. For example, as of March 31, 2008, women represented only 20% of workers in the operational category. These are jobs such as trades, ships' crews, firefighters, and other services. The technical category is also male-dominated, with only 32.5% female representation. This category includes such jobs as engineering and scientific support, technical inspection, and products inspection.

When one looks at how the figures have changed over the past decade or so, there is not a lot to celebrate. That is because although the overall proportion of women in the technical and operational categories has increased, this has not been the result of a significant boost in the hiring of women; rather, it is largely due to a higher rate of attrition for male workers.

Why do we continue to see such a gender gap persist for many jobs?

Women have less access to certain types of education and training. For example, although women represent more than half of all university graduates, the number of women taking engineering and natural sciences has barely increased in almost 20 years. Women certainly do not have access to and are not encouraged to train in the skilled construction trades. Further, fewer women than men have access to employment insurance and therefore cannot access the retraining moneys available under that program. Even when they are on the job, women experience a gender training barrier. Women are less likely to receive employer-sponsored training than men, according to a recent study by Statistics Canada.

Another important barrier to women's access to many job markets is the lack of support for child care and elder care, the unwillingness for employers to provide flexible working hours or other such arrangements, and the fact that women are often penalized for taking extended leaves of absence for child or family care. The view that some jobs, particularly senior managerial positions, skilled manufacturing jobs, or other male-dominated professions, are unsuited to flexible and part-time work arrangements or job-sharing reinforces this gender gap.

For racialized women, immigrant women, aboriginal women, and women with disabilities the barriers to full participation in the labour market are larger and run much deeper. Discrimination and marginalization, lack of access to training and education, lack of recognition of foreign credentials, and lack of accommodation and accessible workplaces all contribute to further labour-market segregation.

Of course, sex discrimination and stereotypical views of women are still prevalent. A sexist culture and harassment in workplaces and in schools still persist and result in many women leaving, even after they've tried to break into non-traditional areas. There must be assurances that when women enter these sectors, harassment and bullying is not tolerated, and workplace cultures ultimately must change.

In the federal public service, approximately one in three women report having been the victim of harassment, and 55% of women reported having been the victim of discrimination on the basis of sex. Unfortunately, the Treasury Board does not provide the breakdown of these numbers by occupational category. This is information we have asked for and have been denied.

There are a number of ways in which these barriers to women's full and equal participation in the labour market can be addressed.

Employment equity legislation must be strengthened. Employment equity policies and programs that specifically focus on bringing women into non-traditional sectors and jobs must be

introduced, and they must also ensure that racialized and aboriginal women and women with disabilities have access to these jobs.

Infrastructure moneys should be tied to employment equity requirements. Since most of the infrastructure moneys flow into the creation of traditionally male-dominated jobs with no incentive or obligation for contractors or employers to recruit more women into these jobs, it means that women have been largely shut out of the benefits of these investments.

Prevention of sexual and racial harassment in the workplace is a key component of ensuring women's access to non-traditional areas of employment. There must be proactive obligations for employers to make the workplace welcome to women and to prevent harassment.

The 2006 Harry Arthurs report on employment standards in the federal public sector made some important recommendations that if implemented would mean an improvement for women working in the federal sector. Examples include improvements to family responsibility and parental leaves, protections for nursing mothers, and provisions with respect to training.

● (1540)

Other important measures include better employment standards, retraining funds to allow women to be trained in non-traditional areas of education or skills, improved access to employer-sponsored training, and the promotion of more flexible work arrangements in virtually all types of work.

Finally, to ensure that more women enter areas of non-traditional employment, basic supports are needed. A national child care program and an improved employment insurance program are vital components for ensuring women's full participation in the workforce. Pay equity is also a fundamentally important right for women's social and economic equality.

Thank you.

● (1545)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Ducharme.

You've been here too often—you're bang on time. You've even given us two minutes extra. There we go.

Now we'll go to Ms. Matsui.

Ms. Hiromi Matsui (Past President, Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology): Thank you.

Good afternoon, Madam Chair and committee members.

[*Translation*]

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

[*English*]

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you about increasing the participation of women in non-traditional occupations.

My name is Hiromi Matsui and I'm a past president of CCWESTT, the Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology. I work out of the IRMACS Centre, which is an interdisciplinary mathematics research centre at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, British Columbia.

CCWESTT is a pan-Canadian umbrella organization with 27 member organizations, from SCWIST, the Society for Canadian Women in Science and Technology, in Vancouver, British Columbia, to WISE in Saint John's, Newfoundland. CCWESTT holds biannual national conferences for women in SETT—that's science, engineering, trades, and technology. The next conference will be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in May 2010.

CCWESTT member organizations promote women-in-SETT through recruitment and retention activities, in the form of workshops, hands-on activities, and talks with role models. We have a website, www.cwestt.org, which contains a wealth of statistics, reports, and information. I invite you to go there to share what is going on in Canada.

CCWESTT encourages young women to consider careers in non-traditional occupations. This is an important topic that covers a wide range of occupations, from engineering professionals to women working in skilled trades. These women face many similar challenges and barriers as they try to advance their careers. The lack of role models in leadership positions is a critical factor.

One of the most exciting conferences I attended was a women in trades conference in Vancouver organized by Kate Braid. To see a room full of skilled female tradespeople, from carpenters to millwrights to welders, strong women both physically and mentally who've dealt with challenges and harassment in the workplace and survived, is an uplifting experience.

Yesterday I talked with a young millwright in Saskatchewan who is the only female in her company. The company uses her as a poster child, but she has to do double the normal amount of work to prove herself and admits it is difficult. When she first started working at the company, she would ask her supervisor questions about procedures and what she should do and he responded with grunts and other strong communication noises. She started calling him "Caveman Joe". Fortunately, her sense of humour helped her cope and survive.

The reality is that many companies in trades do not want to hire women. They view diversity as a problem, which is why we've developed a checklist of strategies to work with companies to help them cope with training challenges—we're working on the French version of that checklist; I'm sorry we don't have it ready yet.

CCWESTT has developed a centre in Edmonton, called the WinSETT Centre, to partner with industry to deliver women-in-SETT leadership programs. We've already run career awareness workshops for aboriginal and immigrant women and we plan for more in the future.

A great deal of work has been done to encourage women in non-traditional occupations, but you know the gender pay gap still exists in Canada, especially for women with post-secondary training getting 68¢ to the dollar that men get. We need to communicate to employers and policy-makers the business case for diversity.

Diversity policies can result in increased innovation potential. Employers can access a broader base of talent. They can have stronger financial performance.

In 2002, Richard Bernardi found a clear link between companies with female directors on boards and those on Fortune 100's best companies list. In its research, Catalyst found that companies with the highest representation of women directors outperformed those with the lowest representation.

Diversity policies can result in enhanced market development. Women influence 80% of consumer purchase decisions. Many of you know that the number of women entrepreneurs has increased dramatically between 1981 and 2001, over 200% compared to a 38% increase by men. You have to remember this increase also includes women engineers, and it includes skilled tradespeople.

● (1550)

At work I've met a woman who has set up her own caulking company because she has found a niche in trades that fits her strengths and what she wants in her work. She specializes in industrial caulking and she does very well.

Julita Vassileva is the NSERC chair for the prairie region for women in science and engineering, and she points out that "Research must be carried out to develop an enhanced understanding of gender issues". She says:

Promoting women does not mean treating them in the same way as men. Men's characteristics, situations and needs are often taken as the norm, and—to have the same opportunities—women are expected to behave like them. Ensuring gender equality means giving equal consideration to the life patterns, needs and interests of both women and men.

I'm here today because I have a dream of a Canada where equal opportunities will exist for all women and men. My dream is inspired by my grandmother, who came to Canada as an immigrant. She and my grandfather built a cabin in Marpole. They were very poor. The children were hired out to families as house help when they were eleven years old.

My grandmother had a dream for her children, a dream of opportunity. I have a dream of a Canada where young people, particularly young women, will be encouraged to study mathematics and physics by counsellors and teachers, not discouraged. I still hear this every day.

My own experience in an Ontario high school was having my principal advise me not to become a teacher because he said I'd have difficulty finding a job because of my racial background. My mother worked as a housekeeper but took courses and got a secretarial job in a hospital. I thought about teaching, but ended up studying at the London School of Economics and worked on the contribution that working women make to the economy. Having come from a strong line of working women, I saw that they did a lot and contributed to the economy and I wanted to do research in that area.

Simon Fraser University supported me in working on diversity in the faculty of applied sciences, and if you think that's a common thing, you're not right. I was fortunate to work with two deans who supported my work in diversity with both faculty and student groups in computing and engineering science. We now have several female faculties in engineering science, where previously we had one female faculty.

My grandmother gave me a dream and a gene pool with a lot of determination and strength. We have the business case, we have the data, we have the case studies, but there are still many challenges to move forward. But I say to you, yes, we can.

Merci.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

That was a very moving tribute and a reality of what you have had to face. It is sad that after three generations women are still facing some of those challenges.

We're going to move into questions and answers. The first part is a seven-minute question and answer session, and the seven minutes include the question and the answer. So I would ask everyone to try to be as succinct as they can.

Anita.

Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to all of you for coming.

Ms. Matsui, we met for the first time when you came as part of a round table when this committee was established for the first time and we were trying to assess the needs of Canadian women. If I remember correctly—and I may not—I seem to recall your talking about your dream at that time as well.

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: I dream a lot.

Hon. Anita Neville: Well, those who work with you are lucky.

Can you identify for us—well, you have somewhat already—the progress that has been made and articulate clearly where progress has not been made? Where it has been made, you identified the issue of women directors of boards having a profound influence on hiring and training of women. What else makes a difference?

• (1555)

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: I wish I had something we could celebrate, but I have to be frank and say that when you look at data, which we all look at, the enrollment numbers of women in engineering are not increasing.

What makes a difference is having female deans of engineering. We now have several female deans of engineering. Elizabeth Cannon in Alberta was one of the first. We now have a female dean at UBC. We have a female dean in Toronto. These women are in positions of leadership and will make a difference, because deans have not a lot of power but they have enough power to influence things like hiring committees.

But organizations like CAF, and unions, which are pressing for greater equality, make a difference because they actually have some employers led by women and men who will listen and invite their managers and employees to work with them.

After working many years in the field, I have to say that when I was young and feisty I was angry a lot. I still get angry a lot, but I realize now.... Someone said that you have to work with the willing. And I think there are many people out there, both women and men, who are willing to listen. I worked for many years with the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of B.C., and when I first walked into this room and saw all these middle-aged men in suits, I wondered what I had gotten myself into. That experience of working with those people developed some profound friendships for me, where we learned and listened on both sides.

Professional organizations like Engineers Canada and the provincial engineering associations can make a difference, because they can provide the leadership profile of encouraging their members to become aware and to become educated on the kinds of policies and practices that are barring and keeping women out. It's not only recruiting. You all know the retention issue is a huge one. We're training lots of women in science, but Canada is doing a very poor job of retaining them. And the obvious reason is that women get married, they have families, and there's no day care. You know, this isn't rocket science.

I think leadership is a key component, and nurturing women leaders. There are some industry leaders who realize that retaining women is a real competitive advantage. IBM is one company that is doing an excellent job. Johnson & Johnson are doing it. And as more multinationals realize it—once we recover from the recession—I think there is hope there.

But the impact of the cultural forces that are causing our young people and our teachers and counsellors to think in very narrow terms, in terms of nursing and teaching and medicine as career choices, is profound.

I have recently been looking at the online games targeted at pre-school children. The whole Disney machine, which is a very powerful one, is encouraging creativity and all the artistic design and so on. But there are positive things happening. Let me tell you, at Simon Fraser University we have a new campus in Surrey. At Surrey, one of our newest schools is called the School of Interactive Arts and Technology. That school is combining design and technology studies and they're attracting both women and men students, because women are interested in the design of a cell phone, in the design of an interface, as well as learning something about the technology. So interdisciplinarity is a huge area.

It's such a complex issue, as you yourself know.

Hon. Anita Neville: Seven minutes.

•(1600)

The Chair: And you only have one and a half left.

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: I wish I could give you some really good answers. But I think leadership is vital and I think we need leadership at the provincial and at the national level.

I wish I had a clear, simple answer, Anita.

Hon. Anita Neville: Thank you.

May I have a little bit more time?

The Chair: You have a minute and 15 seconds.

Hon. Anita Neville: I have a quick question to the Public Service Alliance. You talked about the Employment Equity Act and the lack of rigour used in employing it. If you had to prioritize one or two or three major issues in terms of employment equity, both with the federal government and federal government contractors, what would you identify?

Ms. Allison Pilon (Human Rights and Employment Equity Officer, Membership Programs Branch, Public Service Alliance of Canada): There are a number of concerns we have about the effectiveness of the current legislation, and obviously we're preparing for a review of the act at some point.

One of the impacts on this area of women in non-traditional jobs is that employment equity plans have to look at the external labour market and reflect that external labour market. But they do that by occupation. If you don't have a high representation of women externally in the labour market, the employer who is looking at how to set goals for the hiring of women, for example, won't have to set very high goals. It doesn't encourage breaking into non-traditional areas. That's certainly one area. There's a whole number of other recommendations we have that we probably don't have time to get into here.

The Chair: You've gone 23 seconds over.

Hon. Anita Neville: I don't have time, and 23 seconds won't do it.

If you have them readily available, it would be very helpful if you could send them to the clerk or the researcher.

Thank you.

Ms. Allison Pilon: Yes.

Ms. Patty Ducharme: One thing, just very quickly, would be the recommendations of the Perinbam report that were never implemented.

Hon. Anita Neville: That was a long time ago.

Ms. Patty Ducharme: Yes, and we would like to see those recommendations implemented with a higher percentage of equity group members in the workplace that is reflective of the availability of racialized workers, aboriginal workers, and workers with disabilities.

Hon. Anita Neville: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Neville.

We'll go to Monsieur Desnoyers.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Desnoyers (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Thank you, Ms. Fry.

Welcome to you all.

Ms. Ducharme, I shall start with you. I must say that I thought that in the federal public service women's labour rights would be more recognized than they seem to be. You spoke of harassment and discrimination. I believe that you submitted a study showing with important data cases of harassment and discrimination in the different groups or professional categories. I would like you to speak more on this subject.

I would also like to hear you speak further on the approach used to train women in non-traditional occupations within the federal government. You referred to child care. Family responsibilities also need to be taken into account. Are they taken into account? Are there reasonable accommodations made in non-traditional occupations so that women have access to these types of employment?

The last issue I would like to address is that of Aboriginal women. You touched on the subject and I would like to know more about discrimination. In this case, discrimination is more of a racial kind. While this is not only a problem at the federal level, it is in the federal context that I would like to hear you on that point.

I also have a question for Ms. Hiromi Matsui. According to the Conference Board, in 2025 we can expect an important manpower shortage in the non-traditional trades and professions. I would like to know what role could women play in alleviating this shortage.

This should use up my seven minutes.

Ms. Patty Ducharme: Thank you very much, Mr. Desnoyers. I shall answer in English because I am a little faster in English.

[*English*]

With the statistics that we used from the current public service, the statistics related to women who currently work for the public service, those statistics actually come from the most recent public service employee survey that was conducted by Treasury Board Secretariat on behalf of Treasury Board and other core administration employers. I believe it was done last year, in 2008, so that's where the statistics from the public service that are public service-specific come from.

I believe your next question was with respect to accommodation of women in broader trades and whether there was sufficient accommodation for them to fully participate in non-traditional work. Is that correct?

I don't actually believe that there's significant or meaningful accommodation of women and family status for women to fully participate economically in Canada, period. I do speak from a pan-Canadian perspective. While I recognize that Quebec has the best child care program in Canada—or at least I would suggest that it does—I recognize that there are problems for part-time workers, students, and shift workers who live and work in Quebec. There's also the whole issue of space availability for children.

For women across the rest of Canada, I would suggest that our failure to deal with the issues related to child care and eldercare definitely has a huge impact on women's ability to fully participate economically in the country.

On the question of aboriginal women, were you asking about the statistics or...?

• (1605)

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Desnoyers: My question was more concerned with the attitude of the workplace towards these women in non-traditional occupations. Is there more racism, discrimination or harassment? What are we doing to accommodate these native women?

[English]

Ms. Patty Ducharme: I certainly think we need to ensure that those work environments are free of harassment and free of racism, including institutionalized racism. A good example of that would be some of the language we try to negotiate in our collective agreements, language that is reflective of traditional aboriginal cultures, for traditional interment ceremonies, for example, and also for leave with respect to those who participate in hunting season; we have language that covers this for our members who live and work in the northern territories of this country.

Obviously there are ways in which we can work to ensure that people who do come into workplaces feel welcomed and don't feel excluded from the workplace and the workplace culture as new hires.

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: Thank you.

I just want to clarify the question. I thought you asked what women could do to increase the number of women in skilled trades. Is that what you were asking?

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Desnoyers: The Conference Board said that in 2025 there will be an important shortage of qualified manpower in non-traditional professions and trades. I was wondering how women could contribute to the solution.

[English]

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: It's very interesting how you phrased the question. I'll attempt to answer it.

With respect, I think it is a responsibility of all people, not simply women. In fact, there are many more men in power than women.

You know, I come to Ottawa now and then, and I have to say that I see a very big disconnect between what is going on in Canada, in real life, and what is going on in policy rooms. I see a very big lack of accountability and a very big gap between practice and principle.

I have to say that when I hear about the experiences that women in the skilled trades are experiencing now in Canada, and then you ask me this question, I am slightly taken aback by it. That's because I think all of us, particularly the people in government, in leadership positions, have a responsibility to educate and inform employers and managers about human rights legislation. I've sat in meetings very recently where managers have said that if they get a stack of applications from women and some from men, they'll put the ones from the women aside and they'll look at the ones from the men.

This is very common practice, so what this points out to me is that there needs to be an increased awareness and understanding of the legislation in our country by our legislators and by the people like yourselves who work for the country. Because people do not understand. I work in a university where everyone has their own point of view and we try to gently point it out when something goes against the human rights code.

Hedy's making faces at me. Sorry.

• (1610)

The Chair: That's okay. Ms. Matsui, we have gone to eight minutes and 45 seconds. That was a long time.

Cathy McLeod.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to also thank the witnesses.

I guess what I want to do is to give two examples, and I would really appreciate comments from all of the panel in terms of what these examples might mean and what we can learn from them.

My first example comes from my work with an aboriginal community in the 1980s. At that time, they brought up Red Seal training to the community. There was child care available that the band was running. They actually had significant construction opportunities and there were a few women who had uptake of this particular program and continued to work within their community. This was significant construction that lasted for years. There was also cultural sensitivity within that example because it was a band-run project. I don't know if the government shifted away from that kind of model in the 1990s. I don't know what happened, but it's quite discouraging to hear that we're no further ahead. That's sort of my first example. I'm not sure if it was successful. It sounded like it should have had all the features of success.

My second example is that I believe at the time—or maybe it was ten years earlier, and Madam Fry might be able to comment—in medical schools, we had a really disproportionate male-to-female ratio. Of course that's turned around, so I guess in that one example, something happened so that it became much more proportionate and appropriate. In the other example, I don't know what happened because I'm not sure.

I'd really love to hear your thoughts about why one didn't continue to grow, because the goals were the same at the time. It's a puzzle to me, so I'd really like your insight.

The Chair: Ms. Matsui.

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: You speak about medical schools. The number of female applicants to medical school is very high right now. I'm not quite sure what your question was about the medical school issue.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: What we had was.... What was it at one point?

The Chair: Ten percent of the medical students in my day were women.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Yet we managed to shift the medical occupation to a much more equitable footing. What happened there that didn't happen elsewhere?

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: You ask hard questions. Yes, there are positive increases in the medical field. More girls are studying science because they see it as a way of helping make the world a better place.

In regard to what you talk about with the aboriginal issue, I'm afraid the cultural and historical context makes it much more complex. I'm sure Patty can speak to that too. These are not simple wrongs that can be undone easily. The start of sensitivity, of training, of understanding, is only a start. There has to be a coordinated national education on awareness, understanding, and implementation to start that kind of healing, I'm afraid. It's a huge task, as we all know, with many facets.

Every day I drive through a first nations area where they say "Save our future", and they have pictures of the children. This is where I see that you have to do some fundamental work. There is work being done, but it's never been enough. It's a huge challenge.

Patty, I'll turn it over to you to give comment.

• (1615)

Ms. Patty Ducharme: Just on the medical school comment, highlighting the difference, I've never been to medical school. I have, however, been to law school. We were talking about that earlier on, about the number of women entering professions, going to university, getting their degrees in law or getting their medical degrees, who then leave their profession because as a society we don't support their work, and the expectations from their profession are just not realistic.

If you're a young woman and you're a mother and you're going to practise law and work an 80-hour work week, you're not going to see your kids. Quite honestly, there's a huge pressure on young professionals when, as Hiromi said about having equal consideration to the life realities of each gender, we don't do that in our society at this point in time, to the economic detriment for women's' full participation.

With respect to what happened in the band, not having been there, I can't speak to that specifically, but I recognize full well that there's a history of many layers of oppression with aboriginal people in this country. I think that is a full backdrop. There's the whole question of women within that community feeling comfortable and supported in assuming non-traditional work, which could fly in the face of the community and would present some challenges on a personal level for those women in addition to whatever is going on in their lives.

We like to think we can ride in on a white horse and help people out in their communities. We need to be really mindful of letting those communities determine what's going to work for the community itself.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: I absolutely have to agree. Because they seemed to have all the elements of community control and support. There was something missing, or again maybe we don't.... Maybe their funding was for short-term programs, and then they got dropped off in the 1990s. I don't know what happened. We didn't create the tipping point that we'd like to hear about.

Anyway, I appreciate your thoughts on that issue.

The Chair: Thank you.

Now we'll move to Irene Mathysen.

If I could have the committee's permission, when we finish with the witnesses, I might say what I think happened with medical school. We cannot just judge the enrolment and the graduation as the ability to work at it. I have many colleagues who did not practise medicine until the age of 40, after their kids grew up, by which time they were out of modern-practice understanding.

The fundamental thing for women is about rearing children, and that is a big issue for them in being able to get into the workforce—to have the credential and the training, and actually work. It is still so in medicine, but I'll speak to that a little later if you will indulge me then.

Irene.

• (1620)

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I thank all of you for being here and providing this perspective. We had heard from Statistics Canada, and while it was helpful, it was less instructive than what you did, which was to put a human face on the facts.

Ms. Matsui, Ms. Ducharme, and Ms. Pilon, you all made reference to pay equity. You talked about women earning only 68¢ on the men's dollar. I had the sense that you believe pay equity is essential for getting women satisfying jobs and full accessibility to the job market.

We have a Public Sector Equitable Compensation Act. It was part of Budget 2009. Does it address your pay equity concerns, or is it too soon for us to see the results of the legislation?

Ms. Patty Ducharme: I believe I appeared before the committee to speak on the Public Sector Equitable Compensation Act. It was implemented in the Budget Implementation Act and enacted on March 12 of this year. It was all very recent, and we don't yet have any numbers to base an analysis on.

With respect to that act, I will say that it prevents public sector workers in female-dominated groups from filing complaints with the Human Rights Commission. It does that through a whole host of mechanisms.

First, it increases the threshold of what is considered a female-dominated group from 55% to 70%, which virtually eliminates all the outstanding complaints that we have. It obliges the worker to go ahead on her own, without union support, to present her complaint. You could hire a lawyer, but pay equity complaints, being highly technical, often last a long time. The system under the Human Rights Commission is not perfect, but it provides results and representation.

The act also bars unions from recommending that their members move ahead with a pay equity complaint, from supporting them in their complaint, and from providing them with representation. For example, if I were to have a discussion with a member and say to her that she should file a pay equity complaint, the union could be fined \$50,000. So the union would be fined for doing its job, which, in my opinion, is to represent its members.

With respect to modernizing the pay equity system, we're critical of the new legislation. We are challenging it in the courts. We believe it's unconstitutional. We believe it violates women's human rights. We feel it's a regressive piece of legislation that's trying to roll the clock back for federal public sector workers in female-dominated bargaining units.

Ms. Irene Mathysen: You made reference to the imbalance in the infrastructure stimulus funding and advocated tying the funding to gender. A lot of the funding is going to sewers, water, roads, and the kinds of things in which few women work. If some of that money had been invested in social infrastructure like child care, or more in affordable housing, would there have been a better outcome for women? Would we have employed more women? Would we have made life better for women by encouraging them to take the kind of jobs we've been talking about here today?

•(1625)

Ms. Patty Ducharme: Absolutely. I know there was a report just released. I'll have to get the details of it for the members of the committee. It was a report that contrasted statistically the numbers had the government invested the money in a national child care program, the increased number of jobs vis-à-vis people working, as opposed to the result from construction, road work, bridge work, and so on. So it focused on the fact that more people would be employed per se through those lines of work, as opposed to work where a large amount of the investment is going into the concrete, into the materials themselves, as opposed to people actually on the job.

We will get that information for you.

Ms. Irene Mathysen: I'd appreciate that very much.

The Chair: You have one minute.

Ms. Irene Mathysen: You made reference to the 2006 Harry Arthurs report and you talked about the pieces you would have liked to have seen implemented. Who is responsible to implement those recommendations? Do you know?

Ms. Allison Pilon: It is my understanding that HRSDC is looking at those recommendations now. Through the Canadian Labour Congress we provided inputs to HRSDC recently, earlier this year. The Canadian Labour Congress provided a whole host of comments on the recommendations and an indication of which recommendations we supported and believed would be positive improvements for employment standards. I don't know what the status of it is at the moment.

Ms. Irene Mathysen: But we're at the end of 2009. Isn't that rather slow?

Ms. Allison Pilon: Yes. My understanding is it was put on the shelf for a few years and HRSDC has picked it up this year and is studying the recommendations.

Ms. Irene Mathysen: Dusted it off, as it were.

Ms. Allison Pilon: Yes.

Ms. Irene Mathysen: I see. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

We will now move into the second round, which is a five-minute round. I would like to please again ask everyone to keep their questions as well as their answers short, so that we can get more questions in and more answers in.

Madame Zarac.

[Translation]

Mrs. Lise Zarac (LaSalle—Émard, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I have two questions to ask. My first will be very brief because the second will be a little longer.

My first question is for Ms. Ducharme who said that most women work part-time and that only 28% do so as a matter of choice.

Do you have these data? We spoke of this in our committee and we debated around this question of choice. Do you have that document and could you submit it to the committee?

[English]

Ms. Patty Ducharme: Yes. We are just looking at our footnotes to see what the source was. Perhaps I could answer that question in a couple of seconds.

[Translation]

Mrs. Lise Zarac: Now for my second question. When you have the answer, please... Anyway, if you have it, we would like you to submit it to the committee.

This week I attended an award ceremony for business women in Quebec. At my table sat a young 26 year old woman who had studied science and engineering. This young woman began her own business because she was not taken seriously when she worked for big companies. So she decided to open up her own shop and she is succeeding very well. Indeed she received an award that evening.

[English]

So your dream, Mrs. Matsui, is coming to a reality.

[Translation]

As a matter of fact, young women...

But it is not that easy. I hear today that there are huge obstacles, particularly in some fields.

According to a document from the Library of Parliament, 40% of management positions are held by women. However, only 17% are executive positions and only 6% senior executive positions. I would not consider this as non-traditional work. If we put this in the non-traditional category, I find this really worrisome.

You spoke of roadblocks. Really we are not talking about technological impediments, but rather of an employment equity issue.

Do you think that this is a realistic conclusion? I believe that throughout our discussion today we spoke more about employment equity than about defining non-traditional work.

• (1630)

[English]

Ms. Patty Ducharme: Many of the barriers women face in non-traditional employment and in employment in general are related to the fact that they are equity group members. That's why we have an Employment Equity Act. Sadly, it doesn't have the teeth we'd like to see it have.

Mrs. Lise Zarac: What could we do to give it more teeth?

Ms. Patty Ducharme: Well, I think we could make employers more accountable. We could provide for more employment equity officers who audit the work of federally-regulated employers across the country. It's my understanding that very few employers are actually audited for their employment equity statistics. I am an employer, as a union. We hire good staff. We try to be good to our staff, but I'm not convinced that all employers take their employment equity obligations seriously until such time as they are actually audited by the government.

[Translation]

Mrs. Lise Zarac: Yes, because with equal competencies, minorities should have priority.

Ms. Matsui, you spoke about a company that set aside these CVs. Have they been exposed? This is serious!

[English]

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: No, of course they're not, unfortunately. They're not reported, because these people, ironically enough, are looked on as allies, because they actually dared publicly to talk about it and attend a conference about women in the trades.

[Translation]

Mrs. Lise Zarac: Did you say that they spoke publicly about it? I am sorry but I did not understand.

[English]

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: This manager talked publicly about it. The fact that he had the courage to speak about it, in an environment that was positive for women in the trades.... He was giving evidence of the challenges women face. So of course, no one would think of calling up some provincial manager with a complaint against this man.

Mrs. Lise Zarac: If you had two dream priorities, what would they be? Keep in mind that this committee is studying this to make it better. What would be your two priorities? What would be your recommendations to this committee?

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: I think you raised a very good point about equality, and we've been talking about equity. Patty made a recommendation about tying infrastructure money to equality or equity provisions. I'm afraid that dollars do matter and that the process of giving dollars should involve a greater involvement in equity issues.

I know that some agencies are looking at doing this and are revising processes, but these things take a very long time. The fact is that we have legislation that people are not following. So how are we

to get people to understand how important it is? It's a huge challenge. But thank you.

Mrs. Lise Zarac: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll go to Ms. Hoepfner.

Ms. Candice Hoepfner (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I appreciate that.

I appreciate the witnesses being here. I especially appreciate Ms. Matsui. I think in many ways you are a role model for young women. So thank you for being here and for sharing your story.

One of the things that I think is so important is that we find a way to help young women and young girls dream of being involved in the trades and in non-traditional roles. I think that's probably where we need to start, because if we don't see that happen, we won't have women who are grown....

Right now, young girls can imagine themselves as doctors and lawyers, but they aren't really imagining themselves involved in trades and craftsmanship. I actually just recently read an article about how, overall, we have undervalued the tremendous contribution labour and craftsmanship skills provide to our society and our economy. I think we're reaping that right now with the huge shortage of skilled labour we have. Right now, we're seeing it even more so with women being involved in non-traditional roles.

I'm wondering if you can tell us a little bit about what you do and what your group does to educate young women, specifically young girls, even at the elementary level. Is there a program right now that is working to educate and inspire young girls to get involved? As I said, I'm thinking more about programs aimed at the elementary and high school levels as opposed to older young women.

• (1635)

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: Thank you.

There are a large number of programs for elementary and high school girls. There are even programs for pre-school children now; it's not for lack of volunteer organizations or for-profit organizations. We have a lot of activity within Canada encouraging kids to do math and to study puzzles. You go into any store and you will see that very young kids, often middle-class kids, are very encouraged to do these kinds of things; but there's certainly a lot more education needed in the trades area.

I think most parents realize as soon as their kids start buying toys that their choices get directed very, very quickly through media and the products they develop. One young computer scientist I work with, who is a mother, told me that when her daughter was three or four, she loved playing with math blocks, but then suddenly stopped playing with them. Her mother asked her why, and she said, well, no one will play with me if I go to the math blocks station at the pre-school.

So these things start amazingly young. It is a very complex issue, and I agree there is a terrific skills shortage. But there are programs. For example, in British Columbia, at BCIT, the British Columbia Institute of Technology, there are pre-trades programs to encourage young women to study in a trades area. But the truth of the matter is that for a woman to study trades in Canada now, she has to be an exceptional person; she has to have a great deal of strength, of confidence in herself as a person. She probably has the support of an uncle or father or other relative to encourage her to do this. And it's very, very hard.

We think of the challenges that professionals face—engineers, doctors and so on—but in the trades, it's really very brutal. Until we change that whole environment.... Working in a mine or on a construction site, it's a very difficult environment for a woman to survive in. Frankly, I think it takes a very strong person to cope with it.

So I wish I had an encouraging answer for you, but I don't.

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: Regarding the other question dealing with role models, our government has provided \$1.2 million to Equal Voices, and part of that is a mentorship program. I know our goal is to see young women mentored, not just by politicians or doctors or lawyers, but also by women, like the one you mentioned who had found a niche business in caulking. It would be wonderful if these women could mentor other young women who have the interest, but have concerns, and maybe don't have the support, so they can see they have the strength to do it. I think all of us in this room have no doubt that the strength of women is there. Sometimes we all need to be encouraged and lifted up and told we can do it.

Maybe that's something we can look at together and find ways to actually locate and encourage these women who are in trades to be mentors, because maybe they don't even realize what they have to offer this discussion and to contribute generally.

I have one more quick question, if I have time.

The Chair: You're ten seconds over.

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: Okay, I'll be very quick.

In regard to the whole pay equity issue, I'm just wondering—

The Chair: Yes, I'll let you go over time, because Ms. Zarac went over. Go ahead.

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: Okay, thank you.

Are you saying that if there's a man and a woman on the same job site, for example, both being electricians with equal qualifications, the same ticket, they would actually not be paid the same? Or are you talking about a woman doing one type of work and a man another, but it's of equal value?

• (1640)

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: Let me be clear and brief: I'm not saying every female electrician is paid 68 cents to the dollar compared with the male electrician's pay, but I'm saying there are lots of data and research studies showing that when you amalgamate the figures, collectively, yes, that's the case for work in the same job, basically.

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: For those with the same qualifications?

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: Oh, yes.

Ms. Candice Hoepfner: Okay, thank you very much.

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: It always amazes me that these reports keep coming out and very little happens.

The Chair: Madame Demers.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you very much, ladies, for coming here. I must say, Ms. Matsui, that I was deeply touched by your remarks and that I find you very inspiring.

You spoke a lot of the women that you meet in the course of your work. For once, I do agree with my colleague. We are rarely in agreement, but I think that she is right to say that role models are needed and that these women could serve as good role models for girls. We know very well that before Julie Payette became an astronaut, there were no female astronauts in Quebec, there were none who wanted to become an astronaut nor any little girl who dreamt of becoming one. I think that when we can present images of women other than sitting behind a typewriter, we shall see young women in these fields.

I wonder if a good way to promote these occupations would be to give more visibility to these women. I wonder if to ensure equal pay in Quebec, the government should not impose penalties to businesses that do not respect pay equity rules. We know that money is an important consideration. Would it not be a way to make sure that businesses revised their pay equity policies and that women get what they rightly deserve?

Before you answer my question, I would like to share something with you. You talk a lot about dreams. Last week, I heard someone say something that deeply touched me and I would like to share that with you.

[*English*]

Rosa Parks sat so Martin Luther King could walk. Martin Luther King walked so Barack Obama could run. Barack Obama ran so our children can fly.

[*Translation*]

I think that it is exactly like your dreams. Do not stop dreaming, we need people like you, Ms. Matsui.

Thank you very much.

[*English*]

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: Well, thank you.

The Chair: After that profound statement, Madame Demers, you still have three minutes.

Ms. Nicole Demers: Well, she has to give me an answer.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: Okay. All right.

Ms. Nicole Demers: I'm glad she has three minutes to answer.

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: *Merci beaucoup.* Thank you very much for your kind words.

You suggest a fine for companies or individuals who do not comply. The trouble with that kind of approach, of course, is that there will be push-back, resentment, and anger, so you have to think very carefully before implementing that kind of strategy. I believe much more in the iron fist in the velvet glove, if you will—and if you can, being positive.

Yes, Julie Payette is a wonderful role model. We applaud her and follow her adventures, her journeys, with great interest. Certainly we could do much, much more to improve information for teachers and counsellors about the benefits of working in trades for both women and men.

[Translation]

Ms. Nicole Demers: Ms. Matsui, you spoke also of a gulf between principles and policies. When you come to Ottawa you say you are always surprised. Could you elaborate more on this?

[English]

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: I don't think I can do that in three minutes, I'm sorry. I work in a university, where we're quite idealistic. But in my CCWEST role, I do work with women at the grassroots who are carpenters and welders, and I do hear their experiences and I have shared some of them with you today. I know what the human rights legislation states, and I think people like us who experience life in Canada know there is a big gulf between practice and principle.

•(1645)

[Translation]

Ms. Nicole Demers: But do you believe, when you come here, that we can really make a difference? Do you think that we mean it when we say that we want to change things?

[English]

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: I think you are honest. I think the challenges are huge, and I appreciate your response: it's very positive, it's very encouraging. It made me glad that I flew over the Rockies last night to come here.

The Chair: Thank you.

There is still 15 seconds left, if anyone wants to add something to that.

[Translation]

Ms. Nicole Demers: Ms. Ducharme, could you speak about the ways in which we could promote young women who choose to do something other than traditional work?

[English]

Ms. Patty Ducharme: I think it's critical that we let young women know they can do absolutely anything they want to do. One good way we could do that is by electing more women members of Parliament. I think that when we see Parliament with 40% women parliamentarians, we'll see a very different Canada.

[Translation]

Ms. Nicole Demers: Thank you very much.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

Irene Mathysen.

Ms. Irene Mathysen: Thank you.

I concur. I think we need more women in leadership roles in the places of power, so young women can say "I can do it".

It's interesting, when we ask women if they'll run federally, they say, "Oh no, I don't know enough about federal politics". My response is always, "That never stopped a man".

I wanted to come back to things going on with PSAC. Once an under-representation of women is identified in any particular occupational group within the public service, what initiatives are taken to improve that gender gap? Who's responsible to see that through? Is anyone held accountable?

Ms. Allison Pilon: We have the Employment Equity Act, so the employers within the federal public service, all the departments, have to have employment equity plans that look at their workforce and look at the external labour market, and take measures to improve those areas in which there is a gap in representation, an under-representation of women or other equity groups. They should sit down at the table with the unions, in preparing that employment equity plan, and come up with ways, solutions, positive measures to improve that representation. It could be training programs, it could be mentoring, it could be recruitment specifically targeted at different groups, specific outreach to different communities and so on. Unfortunately, what we're finding is oftentimes the unions aren't consulted fully.

We do have employment equity committees in a lot of the workplaces, and PSAC has representatives on those committees. I've been working with some of those representatives, and I think more of that committee work needs to be done. Unfortunately, there's not a lot of teeth. Unions aren't able to make complaints, for example, under the Employment Equity Act, when an employer isn't either consulting with the unions or with the equity groups or representatives of employees, or when they're not meeting their employment equity goals or plans, or coming up with plans. That's one of the areas where we'd like to see an improvement to the act, to have more enforcement and accountability, certainly with respect to consultation with unions.

Ms. Irene Mathysen: It sort of goes back to what you said about looking externally instead of looking within.

Madam Matsui, I liked your analogy about the iron fist in the velvet glove. How receptive have employers been to your checklist and your strategies? You said that companies with female directors do better, and it seems strange in a capitalistic society that employers would still be reticent. Has there been uptake and interest?

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: There has been some uptake and interest. I think the positive side has largely come from bigger companies. We have a lot of small and medium-sized companies in Canada, particularly in the trades area. To ask a small or medium-sized company to undertake something like a checklist of strategies.... We had a session with managers and owners of companies in Saskatchewan, and I have to be frank with you and tell you we had quite a mixed response from them. They're trying to get their bottom line to be black. It's what I said earlier, that diversity is a problem for them.

What we're trying to do is work with them, because often it's things they may not be aware of, some kind of exclusion behaviour, that kind of thing. But I think there is some openness, though I think right now, particularly small and medium-sized companies are struggling to survive, struggling to keep the small number of employees they have, so it's very challenging, even with some of the larger companies. We have found some very positive response among selected individuals. So it's yes and no.

• (1650)

Ms. Irene Mathysen: It's interesting, because I worked for a long time on employment equity in Ontario, and the corporate sector was saying we need women; we need to show the diversity of the population, whether it's first nations or immigrants or women, because it improves our bottom line. They were very, very open to it. The tragedy is that in 1995 that employment equity legislation was thrown out in the province of Ontario, so we're certainly behind the eightball.

I appreciate what you say. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Hoepfner.

Mr. Van Kesteren—finally.

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Essex, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I thought it was the Liberals' side. Thank you for that.

Ladies, I have to tell you a story. When I was first asked into this committee, I felt fear and trepidation. I understand, then, some of your concern in moving into the workplace with the men. This is how I had felt. But I have to tell you that I've been welcomed with open arms. It's really been a good experience. I'm hoping that the same thing is happening in the workforce. I think maybe attitudes have changed.

Here's a little story. I remember when I was driving my daughter to her university for the first time. I had to drop her off, and we had a little conversation about her going to university. "Andrea", I said, "your grandmother stayed home; most women at that time did. Your mother was able to work; there was a choice. When you leave school, you will have to work." I suggested to her that we've probably witnessed the greatest revolution in possibly...I would almost say in mankind. We've seen a complete switch in values.

You know, I'm a little bit of a student of history. I think if anybody reads the paper, you'll know that the Anglican Church is having some difficulties, and the Roman Catholic Church in its 500 years—that's 500 years—waited to get the flock back. When we look at that and we understand that what we're seeing are strongholds that have

been entrenched for generations, are we making progress? That's the first question.

Second, are we sometimes just pushing it a little too hard? Are we expecting more than what can be determined?

In light of that, what is the ratio, for instance, in the public workforce compared to the private? I think we've made great strides there. Are there areas like that where we've done relatively well, or exceptionally well, and others areas where we just need to drag them along?

Ms. Patty Ducharme: I'm sorry for moving this microphone; I don't like moving it when it's on. I know that the translator's ears are her tools of her trade—or his trade.

Are we making progress? I think if we were, we wouldn't be here. Quite honestly, I don't think we would be here making a presentation—

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: Statistically, though, are we making progress?

Ms. Patty Ducharme: Statistically? There definitely are more women in the workplace. There's no question about that.

You talked about your partner, your wife, choosing to work. I have to work. I'm a single woman and I have to work. Nobody is going to feed me. I love what I do, so I'm very fortunate, but I have to work.

I think the statistics we've shared with you have shown that with respect to women in non-traditional work, we're not making great strides.

I apologize that you don't have a copy of my brief in writing. You will have it.

In terms of statistics for women, this is using as finely distilled numbers as we can get from Treasury Board. Bear in mind that Treasury Board won't give us the specific numbers for the job classifications. However, 20% of workers in the operational category, which is our blue collar working group, are women. In the technological category, only 32.5% are female workers. That's in the public sector.

It's of note that the 32.5% is only that high because there has been a reduction related to attrition with older male workers retiring. Women workers, because of the work type, are newer hires, so they're not in a position to actually retire.

• (1655)

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: Keeping on that public sector strain, what is the ratio between males and females in the public sector?

Ms. Patty Ducharme: I can't answer that question on the whole public sector.

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: That seems to be something we just can't get. We recognize that there are some areas where there are deficiencies, but are there other areas where it's the other extreme and we have a larger percentage of women?

Ms. Allison Pilon: I can answer that. I don't have the figure in front of me, but I believe women make up 52% or 53% of the federal public service overall. That includes areas of traditional female occupations, such as clerical work, where women are overrepresented and clustered. The administrative support category, for example, comprises around 80% women. On the other end there are the technical and operational categories that are lower.

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: You're not suggesting we try to equalize them. You don't want to equalize on the one side or reduce those numbers. I guess I'm saying that as we view history we see things are changing. We've seen some remarkable changes and some good movements.

Ms. Patty Ducharme: Are you suggesting we would want 80% of the administrative workers to be men and 20% to be women? Are you suggesting we don't want to see 50:50?

We'd love to see 50% of women able to work in the public service in all categories of work.

The Chair: I'm sorry, Mr. Van Kesteren, but you are now at six minutes and 39 seconds and I think we have to end it. You've gone over the five minutes. I allowed it because it was an interesting exchange and I think we all benefited from it.

I'm going to ask the witnesses to give us a one-minute summation because there are things they couldn't answer. If I let you do that and you have a comment on this last question, Ms. Matsui, you can roll it into your one minute.

After the witnesses I will do the thing on medicine.

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: Thank you. I will be very brief. I apologize because I have to leave very shortly.

The Chair: Then you have a minute, Ms. Matsui.

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: Thank you.

Most women are working in social service jobs. Do I think our expectations are a little on the high side? I think not. We live in very conservative times, but I'm encouraged that all of you are open, receptive, and listening. There are many issues of social justice, pay equity, and child care that need to be addressed within Canada. I thank you for the opportunity to talk with you all. If you would like more details, Danielle has my...

The Chair: Before you leave, Ms. Matsui, there are two things you mentioned in your paper and I wonder if we can get them. One is the 2002 Richard Bernardi—

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: I'll send it.

The Chair: The other one is the Catalyst research.

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: Yes, I have the Catalyst research one.

• (1700)

The Chair: Just send it to the clerk and we will make sure it's translated and sent out to the members.

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: Wonderful.

The Chair: Thank you very much for coming. I know you have to run to catch your flight.

Ms. Hiromi Matsui: My apologies. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Ducharme, you can do your one-minute summation.

Ms. Patty Ducharme: Sure.

I promised I would provide the source for the statistical information related to women part-time workers. It comes from Statistics Canada, "Women in Canada: work chapter updates", from 2006. I have a copy of it, but we can provide you with one as necessary.

Earlier on, one of the committee members asked if there were two things we wished for. I didn't get to answer that question, so I'm going to take the liberty to do that.

They would include a national child care program and the elimination of discrimination of all kinds. That would include proactive pay equity legislation. We are truly committed to ensuring that women in Canada have the ability to access full economic equality in this country. That includes access to working in non-traditional jobs. They deserve the support to fully participate from us as members of civil society.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Ducharme. And thank you, Ms. Pilon. You may stay for my little comment on Cathy's question. I think it was answered.

We cannot only look at the statistics of women moving into certain professions that were non-traditional, like medicine and law, and suggest that we've solved the problem. I can tell you things that we did to help a lot of female physicians to practise, because when I was within the B.C. Medical Association and president, and the Canadian Medical Association, we worked closely on this. One of the biggest problems that women practitioners came out from their graduation with was how did they work. Many of them were immediately trying to have a family because they were late starting and they didn't know how to do that. They didn't know how to work in medicine, because medicine is a very demanding job, as is law. You have to be there when your client needs you; you don't pick the times that people get sick or deliver their babies. So it was a demanding profession, and women were not doing the profession fully; they would work part-time.

We made some changes within our profession because we had enough mouthy women like me, and we did make changes. Those changes were won to allow for flexibility in residency programs, because a lot of women couldn't go into surgical programs because it demanded so many hours and they were having babies. So instead of doing a four-year residency in surgery, they could do it over six years by doing it part-time. So those little things that are the practical things that do make a difference had encouraged a lot more women to get into the cutting specialties—as we call them—because they tended to go into the cognitive ones because they allowed them more leeway.

So that was the start. I think what happens with women in the workplace is quite often because the demands of the workplace have remained in the old traditional demands women can't fit into those traditional demands of a non-traditional workplace. So what they have to do is those workplaces have to change. Women can go in and women can compete. Women are as bright or not as bright as men. We are both capable of doing those things, but then it's when you get into the workplace how the institutions change to make room for the realities of women's lives. In medicine that was a huge amount of work that we did, and as more and more women got into medicine more and more women pushed for those workplace changes to get them to practise. So now many women practise medicine by two people doing one practice. They get to spell each other off. It's a flexibility issue.

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: It takes time.

The Chair: Yes, it takes time, but it takes a willingness for institutions to change as well. It's not just the women changing; it's

the institutions that need to change. So I think that is what we discovered.

The other thing, the change that Madam Demers talked about, we found that it did take time. It has to be a generational change.

And I would like to say to Dave that today he is talking about his daughter and saying you will be able to choose what you do in a different way from your mother and your grandmother. I think it is because of men in their fifties now having daughters who are going to university, so coming out and finding themselves meeting that glass ceiling in the workplace, that men are asking why she can't move up that ladder when she's as bright as anything. They are beginning to understand the reality of some of that glass ceiling and they are also beginning to change it. But it does take time for that to happen.

Thank you very much. We have to move in camera now.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

MAIL  POSTE

Canada Post Corporation / Société canadienne des postes

Postage paid

Port payé

Lettermail

Poste-lettre

**1782711
Ottawa**

If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:
Publishing and Depository Services
Public Works and Government Services Canada
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5

*En cas de non-livraison,
retourner cette COUVERTURE SEULEMENT à :*
Les Éditions et Services de dépôt
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Additional copies may be obtained from: Publishing and
Depository Services
Public Works and Government Services Canada
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5
Telephone: 613-941-5995 or 1-800-635-7943
Fax: 613-954-5779 or 1-800-565-7757
publications@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca
http://publications.gc.ca

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the
following address: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

On peut obtenir des copies supplémentaires en écrivant à : Les
Éditions et Services de dépôt
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5
Téléphone : 613-941-5995 ou 1-800-635-7943
Télécopieur : 613-954-5779 ou 1-800-565-7757
publications@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca
http://publications.gc.ca

Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à
l'adresse suivante : <http://www.parl.gc.ca>