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Chair

Ms. Hélène LeBlanc

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• (1530)

[Translation]

The Chair (Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP)): Good afternoon everyone. On this beautiful spring Monday, I welcome you to the 24th meeting of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. The committee is continuing its study of the economic leadership and prosperity of Canadian women.

Witnesses, good morning.

We have the pleasure to welcome Ms. Clare Beckton, Executive Director of the Centre for Women in Politics and Public Leadership of Carleton University. We also have with us Ms. Mary Cornish, Chair of the Equal Pay Coalition, Ms. Betsy Kennedy, Chief of the War Lake First Nation, and Ms. Kathleen A. Lahey, Professor at the Faculty of Law of Queen's University.

Each witness will have 10 minutes to give their presentation.

I would like to start with Ms. Beckton.

Ms. Clare Beckton (Executive Director, Centre for Women in Politics and Public Leadership, Carleton University): Thank you, everyone. Thank you for the invitation to appear today.

I will give my presentation in English.

[English]

This is an important question, obviously. The Centre for Women in Politics and Public Leadership at Carleton promotes women's roles in public leadership by providing leading edge research and training. We work with a wide range of partners to integrate, strengthen, and advance existing work in critical thinking that enhances women's influence and leadership in public life.

We know that women continue to face many challenges in advancing to leadership positions, and I believe that if women are not in positions where decisions are being made, it is significantly linked with their prosperity and economic well-being. There's a correlation, a link, between them.

The centre did a study, which we have brought for the committee, called *Progress in Inches, Miles to go*. It looks at a benchmark study of women's leadership in Canada. When I was a deputy at Status of Women, we heard so often that women have attained equality. We did the benchmark study to have the evidence base that says, on many fronts—this looks at the leadership front—it's very clear that Canadian women have not attained full equality.

When we look at industries, women are significantly, and continue to be significantly, under-represented in senior leadership positions.

In our 2012 benchmark study, we showed that women make up 29% of leadership positions. It's 26% when you remove public administration, which includes the public service of Canada. In some sectors, such as energy and mining and the technical centre, it's approximately 10%, or even below.

On the FP500 boards, it's 15.6%, as our last Canadian Board Diversity Council study showed, with only 9% in mining and oil and gas. Women are significantly under-represented in the higher-paid industries, such as resources, technology, engineering, and they're disproportionately concentrated in industries such as public administration, elementary education, nursing, and service industries. All of this has economic ramifications for the economic prosperity for women.

In our benchmark study, we did a deeper dive into the public service of Canada and the mining sector. That was a juxtaposition of a sector that's done quite well, when you look at the public service of Canada and the strides it has made in advancing women into leadership—it's not 100% yet, but it's come a long way—and the mining sector, which is at the bottom end.

In the Canadian Board Diversity Council annual report last year, when the sector board members were asked if there was a need for change or whether they should keep the status quo in terms of women and diversity on boards, much of the mining sector said they didn't see any need to change.

Of course, all of this starts with the education system and with how guidance counsellors influence young girls and boys. Women in the past, although they do well in science and math, have not been encouraged to go into professions such as technology and engineering. Those sectors themselves have not encouraged women, by the very way that their culture works. They have made it less than friendly for women.

We know—and I'm speaking to the converted—that women are graduating from universities in higher numbers and are well represented in the professional schools. We know that the challenge is not a supply challenge. When we look at law and we look at M.B. A.s, there have been a significant number of women graduating from law schools—in law firms, in government, and in the judiciary. We still only have approximately 30% of the partners in law firms being women, and approximately 30% of the judiciary are women. At the academic level—it's a little better in the law schools—they're still significantly under-represented.

There have been several studies, one of them by the University of Chicago, which looked at their M.B.A. graduates. In fact, the women M.B.A. graduates normally started with a lower salary than their male colleagues and ended up earning less as they proceeded, despite having the same level of education. This again leads to disparities and differences in the economic well-being of women.

• (1535)

What are the challenges that we face? One that we looked at in our study was societal expectations and workplace culture.

There are still gender notions of leaders, which tend to be focused more around the male model. Despite all of the studies that exist on the leadership capability and qualities that women bring to the table, the way that promotional boards often look at it is through the lens of the existing male models. I still hear that women who are assertive are seen as aggressive and are viewed negatively. I've heard reports of promotional boards that will say a man is a go-getter just because he is aggressive, but a woman is really aggressive. We also know that women are promoted on what they've already done and men are promoted on potential. So that results in disparity.

We all know that women often do not negotiate their salaries because they don't want to be seen as self-promoting, which is again another cultural norm that holds women back. Sometimes it's to their disadvantage to negotiate, but many times it's to their disadvantage not to negotiate, because the difference in wage and income earning in part relates to where you start and how well you negotiate that first level of salary.

We still have cultural norms that reinforce women as the primary caregivers for children and parents and so-called workplace family-friendly policies reinforce this because they don't actively support men who seek to be equal caregivers. Just as an example, when we were doing the mining study I spoke to a senior mining executive who told how much he supported women with their family responsibilities. I asked him what he did for the men. He asked me why I had asked and told me that they didn't do anything. I asked him why they didn't do anything. If you do not do it for the men then you harm the women because you continue to reinforce the same cultural norms. It was not by any conscious decision on his part, but simply an unconscious lack of awareness of what the implications were.

So if we need to change the cultures, family friendly policies need to be truly family friendly. I think the federal government with its top-up policies and other policies has done better on average than the private sector in encouraging that.

I don't want to take too long, but want to just highlight a couple of others. There are many other things that we can talk about, but I'll leave those to your questions. One of the areas that I know is of interest here is that women entrepreneurs are viewed as risk-averse and cannot access funding as readily as male entrepreneurs. So if you step out of the industry and the employee stream and you look at women entrepreneurs, they're not doing as well. That has a huge cost to society, something in the range of \$2 billion.

I was part of the Canadian task force for women's business growth. If you are interested in that report it's on the Telfer School of Management's site. In it there was a statement that if women-owned

enterprises were growing at the same rate as male-owned enterprises, there would be another \$2 billion in the Canadian economy annually. That's significant because there still are a number of barriers and challenges facing women entrepreneurs.

Finally, some of the other things that block women from advancement are the verbal and physical violence directed against them. In particular, I would focus not only on the violence against women in society as a whole but that's also directed at women who seek leadership and power. We've seen a lot of these kinds of comments in the media when women speak up, and the misogyny and the terrible comments that are directed at them.

I think of the recent University of Ottawa situation involving the young woman who was on the student council and some of the comments that were made by men about here. These things do harm to women's aspirations for leadership. Our economy needs women in leadership positions.

So that's how I'll end. I'll leave it open for all of you to raise questions. In our work at the centre we are looking to do this kind of background research, looking at some of these broader areas and segmenting some of them. For example, we're going to be looking at some of the areas that are coming up, too.

• (1540)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mrs. Beckton.

Welcome, Chief Kennedy.

I will pass the floor to Mrs. Cornish for 10 minutes please.

Ms. Mary Cornish (Chair, Equal Pay Coalition): Thank you.

I chair Ontario's Equal Pay Coalition, which has worked for 40 years toward trying to close Ontario's gender pay-gap. When I was asked to participate here, I attempted to convert some of the work we had done at the Ontario level to the national level. What was disturbing about the process was to find that the patterns are all the same. Actually, the national gap is higher than Ontario's gap, which is 31.5%, and the national gap is 33%. But some of the same aspects of it are quite similar in the sense that the gap is widening, not narrowing.

The focus we have taken is look at the average annual earnings gap. Again, we're looking at paid employment. Women's unpaid work is a whole other issue that we leave to somebody else.

In the paid situation, though, we look at the average annual earnings, because we want to know at the end of the day what amount of money women actually bring home and what amount of money men bring home. In other words, there are arguments about whether you should really use hourly rates, but we think the main focus should be on the average annual earnings as the starting measure, because that gives you the picture of the earnings that women and men bring home. It also starts the dialogue about what kind of a country we want and what kind of measures we need to actually flip the situation so that men and women bring home equal earnings.

That may mean that you could have different patterns as a result; for example, the mining executive actually encouraging the men to have some involvement with their children. You may have some men going out, and some men staying at home. In other words, you will have a different pattern as you start to equalize all of the categories. It takes time, but we think that is the vision and that if you start with the average annual gap you'll get there.

We see from the last data available on average annual earnings that the gap went up from 32% in 2010 to 33% in 2011. Similarly, in Ontario it actually went up 3% during those years. But it was the same thing: men's average annual earnings increased by \$400 between 2010 and 2011, and women's went down \$500. So the gap didn't close. The men are going up; the women are falling. That's the general picture.

When you use average annual earnings, you are actually taking into account the fact that seven out of ten part-time workers are women. The average annual earnings reflects the fact that a variety of women are in part-time jobs, many forced to be in part-time jobs because so many of their forms of employment are part-time because of the way the employer structures the work. So they are either on call, or they are in more insecure jobs.

Average annual earnings helps you to figure out the question of how to encourage and get women to have more full-time jobs, which would help us to close that overall gap.

The other thing to keep in mind is that a decrease in the gap doesn't necessarily mean that women's conditions are better. It may mean that men's are worse. In other words, because it's a relative figure, you have to look at the two together and drill down to see what's actually happening to men's and women's employment, drill down by the occupational categories that Clare was talking about, and try to figure out what's happening in the economy. One of the roles of government is to try to do that, to try and give us the studies or whatever, so that people like us in the Equal Pay Coalition and academics aren't the only people who are trying to figure this out and analyze the different aspects of it.

The other thing you need to do is to drill down, for example, by management occupations. If you look by occupational data, you will see that in management occupations, women's remuneration went down over that period by \$1,800. They went down from \$62,600 on average to \$60,800. So you again see that in those occupations they are going down; they are not going up.

You can also look at it in terms of sectors. Even in the sectors where you would think it would be better, health occupations for

example, you still see that women earn \$50,700 less annually than men on average in that sector, and that's the one in which they predominate. Similarly, in social science, education, government service, and religion, which is another sector put together by Statistics Canada, you have them earning \$20,200 less. If you go through each occupational category from Statistics Canada, they earn less. If you go through each industry sector, they earn less.

• (1545)

So what is the bottom line? They earn less, and they earn substantially less.

While we talk at various points about how things are getting better, in fact they're not actually getting significantly better, particularly given that women are 62% of university graduates. You would think that over the period of time we're talking about there would have been much more a closing of the gap because of the additional human capital that women are getting. Why aren't we closing it quicker?

That leads us to some of the issues about why there is still a gap. Some of this is that we continue to have this segregation of occupations, so that people are in different... Men and women still continue to be in different kinds of work, primarily, and in different kinds of occupations and industries. As a result, at various points the pay structures are developed separately and lead to some of this problem.

The other problem is that there still is a systemic undervaluation of the kind of work women do. It's different work, and it isn't valued as much as some of the work men do.

Those factors combine to create a variety of these patterns. The brief talks about there being 10 ways a government could focus on in trying to close this gap. Think of it as actual comprehensive planning towards closing the gap. I'll go to that. I can talk a bit more about why, in terms of how it's a human right and how it would contribute to the economy. There's a lot written internationally—and I'm sure some of you have already gone through this—about why increasing women's economic equality actually drives a better and more productive economy. I won't go through those arguments.

I'm going to go through some of the steps, but I'll outline them. First of all, there are 10 of them.

The first one is basically to look upon it as a human right. The reason why it's important to do this is that when we don't look at it that way, it often gets disposed of when we're attempting to make policies, because it's not important enough. We just say that we have a whole lot of choices to make and it's not important enough in the large scheme of things, or that we can't afford to do it and we can't do it, so we're not doing it.

The important thing is to analyze it once you know what the gap is, to figure it out, and to say that it is a human rights priority for you to figure it out. It also allows you, when you're looking at austerity measures, to consider that women should be brought to the starting line before they bear the brunt of austerity measures. In other words, once they're equal, they can bear austerity measures, but before that, all you do is set them further back by applying everything equally to men's and women's work. That's one of the first practical ways of trying to apply a human rights focus to it.

The second is to raise awareness. One of the ways it's done internationally is through Equal Pay Days.

Ontario just declared April 16 to be an official government-declared Equal Pay Day. The day is supposed to be the amount of time women have to work through the following year to earn what men earn by December 31 of the year before. In other words, it takes about three and a half months. The day was one week later than the year before, because in fact our pay gap increased and didn't close.

In the U.S., they had their Equal Pay Day on April 8. It has been declared by the government there. It's a real focus each year to help raise awareness about that gap and also to monitor where you got in the last year in terms of trying to close it. That's another aspect of what one could do. For example, the U.S. White House website has a whole lot of material on it about Equal Pay Day. We could see our Prime Minister having a website that also focuses on women's equality, because it has been seen and it has been part of the State of the Union Address in the U.S.

• (1550)

Now, part of the problem is that some of the measures in the U.S. aren't as strong as some of our measures, actually, in fact, but there's still a broader discussion at the senior leadership level about why it's an important aspect.

The Chair: Mrs. Cornish—

Ms. Mary Cornish: It's time? Okay.

[Translation]

The Chair: I would like to remind the witnesses that all of the documents that were sent to us have been distributed to committee members. When answering questions, you can give more details on the other points that have not been brought up.

I now give the floor to Chief Betsy Kennedy.

Ms. Kennedy, you have the floor for 10 minutes.

[English]

Chief Betsy Kennedy (Chief, War Lake First Nation): Good afternoon.

I want to thank you for inviting me to your committee to share my experience as an indigenous woman leader and to talk about the economic prosperity of indigenous women, particularly those living on reserves in the north, and mainly in northern Manitoba.

It is very important that your study make recommendations that reflect the specific realities faced by indigenous women. I have been chief of War Lake First Nation for eight years, and I was a councillor for four years before that. I've been in leadership since 1997. It has been very hard, especially if your community really asks you to do a lot more than what they would ask a male chief, actually.

One day there was a funeral in the community. I had to stay up all night to attend with the people. When I was a councillor I still did that, but when I was chief they called me to do it. I left at 11 o'clock and then I still went back out. They called. So there have been lots of challenges.

I am also the longest-serving woman chief in Manitoba. I am one of the two women chiefs of northern Manitoba and a woman chief

who represents an isolated first nation. My experience as a woman chief, as I said, has its challenges. One of the things too is that I guess as women, we are a lot more understanding in our way of listening to people. I get more people being upset and yelling at me, and they know, but they know also that I won't get mad or upset. It's a way of allowing them to vent because they won't do that to my councillors who are male, or I don't notice male chiefs being spoken to in that manner.

But I tell them, you know what, if that's how they really feel, I tell them it's best to calm down and then we can talk it through. So they eventually calm down. And that's what they say after a while: they say the reason they like talking to me is because I'm more understanding and I really listen, and even though they get upset, I still manage to talk in a very professional manner.

In leadership, when we attend meetings for our chiefs, there were five women chiefs in Manitoba, and we have our concerns. So we bring up the concerns and we ask our male chiefs to support us, to sign and to second it, if they say no, that this is a women's issue. I was upset one day when they had said that, because women tend to have to get a little bit upset in order to make their voices known. But we have say it in a way that makes them understand that this is not just our issue, it should be everybody's issue. If there are missing and murdered women out there, or issues with education, and taking your daughters and making sure that they're provided with proper lives with their spouses. Another important issue is violence against women, and also I believe more women would run as chiefs if they were given the opportunity, because as I said, we are a lot more understanding. And we encourage our young people to run. That's part of what we do in making sure that these roles are made available to them.

• (1555)

I also want to say to you that on my first nation, it's mostly 100% women in our community offices, except for the band constable and also one who works for child and family services. It's just the two men among the 24 positions.

I've been listening to all the women about the barriers that are faced in everyday life. Aboriginal women share the same challenges and concerns as other women in Canada; however, in many ways aboriginal women are more marginalized. Statistically, aboriginal women and girls make up 4% of the total Canadian female population. The female aboriginal population is growing much more rapidly than the rest of the female population in Canada. From 1996 to 2006, the number of aboriginal females rose by 45%, compared with a 9% growth rate in the non-aboriginal female population.

The aboriginal population is much younger than the non-aboriginal population. In 2006 the median age of aboriginal females was 27.7 years. The fact that we have too many young people, including young women, in our communities means that we also need supports for these youth. That is so very true. We have many young women in our communities, and when they go out to school and bring back their partners, it's difficult sometimes for their partners, their spouses; they have a hard time adjusting.

As for the youth in first nations across the north, there is a lack of funding in terms of education. In fact it has been shown that first nations students on reserve receive a half to two-thirds of the funding that non-aboriginal students receive. Sadly, the lack of funding creates substandard education. The result is that 39% of first nations women in Canada have less than a high school education.

Our youngest children also need supports. Head start and child care programs are often lacking or non-existent in first nations communities. Given that 20% of first nations women are single parents, having access to child care allows them to access opportunities outside the home. These are the programs that the federal government can fund.

It is true that we receive substandard education. My grandson, who is only 10 years old, is concerned about his education. He is in grade 4, but he is worried about going into grade 5, because there are only two teachers and he thinks that going on to the next class he won't learn anything. Then, when he goes on to grade 9 and leaves the community, he knows that he will fail, as they're not being taught the regular curriculum that non-aboriginal students get in rural areas or urban areas.

We've seen it over the past few years, and even now, that many of our youth come home after grade 9. When they do achieve a grade 12 education, it's all specialized. They don't receive a normal grade 12 education; they receive a special education grade 12. When they are employed, they can't do regular math, so they are not hired for any of this work.

Yes, I've been wanting the head start program in my community ever since it started. I've been working on it since 1996.

• (1600)

I don't qualify to access it because my community is very small, but we do have lots of babies. One year we had seven babies born, and it's almost like that every seven years: seven or eight babies, and then two or three in-between.

If we had more programs such as these, it would certainly help the parents, the youth, the young parents.

The Chair: Chief Kennedy, I thank you very much for your testimony. Hopefully, in the questions that will come you will maybe be able to complete your remarks, if you haven't had a chance to do so.

Chief Betsy Kennedy: All right.

The Chair: Mrs. Lahey, for 10 minutes, please.

Prof. Kathleen A. Lahey (Professor, Faculty of Law, Queen's University): Thank you.

Thank you very much for inviting me to speak on these issues today. I am very pleased to see that the focus is on not just questions of leadership, but on questions of economic leadership and women's prosperity. There is a strong connection among all of these concepts, and I would like to introduce my comments by drawing your attention to the one-page handout that each person should have, with a few charts on it that may help contextualize some of my comments.

The first point that I want to make is that women's equality in Canada is definitely not something that has been achieved yet. In

fact, the reality is that women's sex equality, which was very well on the road to becoming a reality back in the 1990s, has been deteriorating rapidly in Canada. People say this a lot, but I decided to put into chart form the most recent international rankings that are based on the same indicators used to assess the degree of sex equality in other countries.

This shows that although Canada was number one in the entire world on the basis of both human development factors as well as on sex equality factors, beginning in the year 2000, Canada has been falling rapidly in the international rankings. On some of the rankings, one of which is conducted by the World Economic Forum, Canada in recent years fell as low as number 31 out of all of the countries in the world. This is a very seriously negative set of rankings that reflect the fact that on every known economic and social welfare indicator, women in Canada are persistently falling behind, with the exception of one. This has already been mentioned by other speakers.

Women in Canada continue to be ranked number one on the issue of educational attainment. I would like to emphasize that because this cannot possibly be blamed on women. Women in Canada have by their actions, generation after generation, demonstrated that they are very strongly motivated to achieve as much as possible with their educational backgrounds, with their abilities, with their energies, and so on. What we are facing here is a question of how economic policies and social policies intersect with women's life aspirations to produce a very disturbing picture showing the deterioration of sex equality in Canada.

The dimensions of women's inequality in Canada are very durable. Over the last 20 years we've seen very little change in some fundamental economic indicators. One is the question of how much unpaid work is done by women as compared to men. The percentage of unpaid work done by women has continued to hang in the 62% to 64% area for the last 20 years; that is, women continue to do the bulk of unpaid work that gets done in Canada. This is by hours.

Also measured by hours, women are now at the point where they have almost equal numbers of hours of paid work, as compared to men. If you add those two sets of figures together, with women doing 45% to 47% of all paid work hours, together with 62% to 64% of all unpaid work hours, you actually see that women are working more hours every year in Canada than men are.

What do women get for it? Recent economic statistics indicate that women's market incomes continue to only account for 36% to 38% of all market incomes. So, for all that work, women are still receiving slightly more than one-third of all market incomes that are received in this country.

I give you these figures because this is a very serious problem, and it is a problem that has significance on the economic level.

•(1605)

International organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and other leading economic organizations have all found in studies they've carried out over the last 10 years or so that the more sex equality exists in a country, the more durable that country's economy is, the more resistant families are to the ups and downs of economic crises, boom and bust cycles. They've also found that the more work is shared equally between women and men, be it unpaid work or paid work, the greater the health, the wellbeing, and the overall productivity of the entire population. This is not a finding that has any real detractors to it: sex equality is a fundamental economic strategy for achieving prosperity.

So what has been going wrong in Canada? My main area of research and focus within the general area of gender issues relating to law and politics is in the fiscal area. I'd just like to draw some basic findings to your attentions, which I think help illuminate the path forward.

First of all, since 2006, Canada has cut its various sources of revenues by approximately 2.2% of GDP per year. Canada is missing \$40 billion worth of revenues every year that it used to have. This has been in conjunction with the effects of economic recession, the combined effect of which has been a growing emphasis on austerity policies, deficit reduction, and cutting public expenditures. Unfortunately, this has made it difficult for Canada to sustain the programs that are absolutely necessary to achieving gender equality in an economically significant way.

One of those ways is that it has brought to a virtual halt any efforts to implement a national child care program, which is essential to making it possible for women to do less than 62% to 64% of all unpaid work in this country. It's just impossible for women to do more in the way of paid work than they have been able to without some relief from the unequal responsibility that they bear for such activities as home care, child care, elder care, community care, and so on.

The second thing that has been happening is that, as Canada has become increasingly reliant on tax expenditures of various kinds to solve political problems, Canada's revenue base has been carved out from the inside so that something like \$172 billion of potential tax revenue is left on the table by the government every year through the existence of a large number of tax expenditures. So for virtually every tax dollar that is collected, another dollar has been left on the table in the form of this large number of tax expenditures.

Most of these many tax expenditures have a negative gender impact, but I just want to draw your attention to the most particularly toxic tax expenditures from a gender perspective, and these are the tax expenditures that have been enacted in order to reward women to not work for pay. That is, there are a large number of tax benefits that have been enacted and are a fundamental part of our tax transfer system that give larger after-tax rewards to households in which women have smaller paid work lives than they would perhaps otherwise have.

At the present time, this is currently costing the Government of Canada \$6.7 billion per year, which I point out is more than enough

to finance even the most lavish national child care program. But along with this is the ongoing promise of new parental income splitting benefits, which would cost the federal government an additional \$2.7 billion come 2015. I have put a little decile breakdown at the bottom of this page to demonstrate how this is not only hugely expensive, but it's also hugely unfair and runs directly contrary to any sensible policy aimed at trying to improve the prosperity of Canadian women.

•(1610)

I will close by making one more statement, and that is that when parental income splitting comes into effect, couples who live on one income of \$190,000 or so per year will receive a tax benefit of \$12,000 from parental income splitting. That's a very large amount of money.

[*Translation*]

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

Ms. Truppe, you have the floor for seven minutes.

[*English*]

Mrs. Susan Truppe (London North Centre, CPC): I'd like to welcome and thank everyone for your comments and also for sharing your personal stories. Seven minutes goes quickly, so I'm going to get right to it.

I'll start with Ms. Beckton and thank you, again, for coming, since you didn't have an opportunity during your last visit due to the votes.

In your opening statement I think you said that through the Centre for Women in Politics and Public Leadership you engage in leading edge research training. What are some of the examples? Do you have a couple?

•(1615)

Ms. Clare Beckton: Leading edge research and training is what we do, and one example is the benchmark study in front of you, which we did to set out the evidence base for saying that we hadn't achieved equality by looking at the leadership level.

We also did a study on creating gender inclusive leadership in mining, which looked at the barriers and opportunities for advancing women's leadership where women are least represented in Canada. Also, we did an outline of the facing women in innovation, because there's no research on that question. Innovation policy in Canada has a gender neutral approach. So we will be engaging and are currently looking for partners to do research around women in innovation and what women's leadership means for innovation.

We are now part of the Clinton Global Initiative regarding women in the public service, and we'll be looking at the impact on public policy of having more women in the public service. That will be the first part of that research and will look at measurement of that impact and the result of that measurement.

We're also looking for sponsors so that we can do some research around women entrepreneurs and how they look at risk and how that may be impacting their ability to obtain financial support.

As I said, we have launched a one-week intensive leadership program and will be adding more aimed at women in these occupations where they are under-represented.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Great, thank you.

I know you're focusing on mining, and I have to say that when I was hosting round tables throughout Canada last year, mining came up a lot. There were individuals from mining corporations who did indicate they were trying to get more women in mining and that they prefer hiring women—or at least one fellow said to me that he preferred to hire women. He said that if he had 10 people and he was only hiring whatever the number, he said he'd hire all the women first. He just thinks they're better workers and more meticulous in what they do. So good luck with that.

You also mentioned that you work with partners. What kind of partners do you work with?

Ms. Clare Beckton: We work with private sector, non-profit, and government. For example, the benchmark study was done with Deloitte. The Clinton Global Initiative and the Public Service Commission of Canada is with us, and we are looking currently for some private sector partners. Our mining study was done with Xstrata Nickel. The former CEO of Xstrata Nickel is committed and is out speaking about advancing women in the mining sector.

Those are just a few of the examples. We are also doing a piece of work with Equal Voice and will probably be launching that next month. We'll be looking at the research on women in politics in Canada and making it more accessible.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Thank you.

I have one other question here. Do you have a best practice to share that would help us get more women into leadership roles? Is there something that stands out that you've seen or done?

Ms. Clare Beckton: I think it really focuses on the culture of the organization. You can take the public service as an example where leadership has to be driven from the top. The top of the organization has to drive it and they have to drive it down through all the levels of their organization, for example, by looking at how they do promotions, how they bring any candidates before any kind of promotion boards.

Also, I think the second thing would be looking at so-called family friendly policies and how they may disadvantage women instead of actually advantaging them.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Thank you.

Thank you for sharing your comments, Chief Kennedy.

It must be very difficult, being where you are. I think you said you're one of the longest-serving chiefs. Congratulations. Are you one of the longest-serving chiefs, not just women in general?

Chief Betsy Kennedy: I'm one of the longest-serving women chiefs.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Good for you, congratulations.

I think you said you've been a leader since 1997. I was going to ask how hard it was to get there, but then after your comments, I assumed it probably was hard to get there because it still seems as if it's very difficult. Is there something you want to share with us that

might help another young girl or another woman? You seem to persevere, no matter what's going on, and I don't know if you have...

In a lot of places someone can go somewhere for recourse, but then you indicated that the bulk of the chiefs weren't supporting you. Where do you go from there? Do you go to a grand chief? It must be very difficult because you don't have a wealth of information or people you can go to who will support you, so good for you for sticking to your guns.

Chief Betsy Kennedy: Thank you.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: You're obviously dealing with a lot of challenges, so maybe there's something you've done you'd like to share that might help other women prosper. I don't know how you've done it, but you're still there. Good for you.

• (1620)

Chief Betsy Kennedy: It has its challenges, but certainly I've helped many first nations leaders, chiefs, and councillors who would like to run. I always tell them it's very hard, but you can do it, and I'll be there to help. I've been there to provide any kind of assistance I can to every woman I've met who has run as councillor or chief.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: So you don't sugar coat it. You tell them it's not fun, it's not great, but get there.

When you feel this is ridiculous, you're getting nowhere because they're not treating you well, and God forbid if they ask you to get a coffee, where do you go? What is your help?

Chief Betsy Kennedy: I go to the elders. They are more understanding than anybody. They go out of their way and they tell you what you're doing is good. Don't let anybody bring you down, but continue doing what you're doing, and that really helps. That's one of the reasons why I persevere.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: So they support you, but they don't go to the male chiefs or the people who are giving you problems. They're giving you feedback and support, but I suppose they're not intervening for you, so it must be difficult for you. Good for you, again. I think we all commend you for doing that.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[Translation]

Thank you very much, Ms. Truppe.

Ms. Ashton, you have seven minutes.

[English]

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Thank you very much.

Thank you, Ms. Beckton, Ms. Cornish, Ms. Lahey, and Chief Kennedy for joining us today and sharing your very dynamic testimony.

I want to thank Chief Kennedy, especially because I know you had the longest road to travel to get here: rail, road, and then plane. Thank you so much for sharing your personal experience, which is unique.

In your introduction you alluded to violence as one of the barriers that indigenous women face. We know that aboriginal women in Canada face higher rates of violence than non-aboriginal women. I believe aboriginal women face three times as much violence, and young aboriginal women are five times more likely to be killed than non-aboriginal women.

Today we heard from the UN rapporteur who's calling for a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women. We know women from first nations in northern Ontario are drumming on Parliament Hill, calling for a national inquiry. Do you believe we need a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women in Canada?

Chief Betsy Kennedy: Absolutely. It's very hard to lose a child, and to lose a loved one.

Ms. Joan Crockatt (Calgary Centre, CPC): Madam Chair, on a point of order, I'm that sure we would love to hear what the chief has to say on this topic, but it's not the topic of this study. Maybe the member opposite could characterize her questions more in terms of how we can achieve prosperity, and thereby allow the chief to be able to answer whatever question she'd like.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I think you can briefly answer the question, Chief Kennedy, and how barriers—

Ms. Niki Ashton: If I could just respond, we've acknowledged that violence is a barrier to women's economic prosperity. It's entirely relevant to the study and, frankly, I think we should show respect to the chief by allowing her to answer the question.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Could you tie it in as a barrier to economic leadership and prosperity.

[Translation]

Thank you.

[English]

Chief Betsy Kennedy: In one of the meetings I had with the chiefs on missing and murdered women, all the women chiefs in Manitoba asked the men to be supportive of that effort. But for us, we had to be more aggressive on what we would like their support to be. We just said, "What if it was your daughter or any young relative you had lost?"

In terms of action for our missing and murdered women, I think if there were more of an inquiry, maybe there wouldn't be as many.

• (1625)

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Young.

Ms. Wai Young (Vancouver South, CPC): On a point of order, again, being from Vancouver and having been a counsellor in the Downtown Eastside for native youth and families, I know that the issue of missing and murdered women is painful. However, this study is about the economic prosperity of women, so I think that question was completely disingenuous and is not relevant to the study at all. I think we need to focus on the study—

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Young.

Ms. Wai Young: —and it's not fair to ask a witness to answer a question that is completely not within the purview of this study.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Young. I allowed the answer.

Ms. Kennedy, do you have anything else to add, or shall we go to the next question?

Chief Betsy Kennedy: Yes, go ahead.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Ms. Ashton.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you very much, Chief Kennedy, and for sharing a very difficult issue that many aboriginal women face.

I wonder if you could also speak to the importance of economic development that reflects the interests of your region? I know that women in first nation communities across the country are seeking employment. They often face high rates of unemployment.

But proposals for economic development don't always fit with the priorities of regions. I understand that one of the proposals that has been put forward and that affects your territory is the proposal to ship crude oil through War Lake and into Churchill. I wonder if women in your first nation see that as the kind of prosperity they want.

Chief Betsy Kennedy: No, I don't think they would like the shipment of crude oil into our community. We are teaching our children our ways of life in the bush, and they feel that once the women teach it our children will grow up to be stronger and they won't have to depend on social welfare. They will have their jobs.

Also, the women are out there hunting and fishing along with their spouses so it's really a family gathering when they do this and it really benefits the community when we also get the children involved. Even the children right now are proud of what they have. We live in the north and we are isolated and we protect our lands and that's what our children are learning.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you very much, Chief Kennedy.

Professor Lahey, I want to turn to you. I know you've been tracking the effects of cuts to the Status of Women department and I wonder if you could speak to that, including the long-term impacts of these cuts and the restructuring on women in Canada.

Prof. Kathleen A. Lahey: Yes, I can briefly comment on that.

The radical cutting of the points of service for women in Canada has had a devastating effect on the ability of community groups to gain access to funding that assists in the development of prosperity-enhancing projects.

In addition, the closing of the policy research fund, which supports forward-looking and fundamental research on the economic status of women and their ability to pursue prosperity, has had very devastating effects because funding organizations like SSHRC, NSERC, and others do not pick up the gender gap that is left in the research. As a result Canada is increasingly operating in the policy realm with inadequate information on exactly how policies are affecting women.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you very much.

Ms. Lahey, I'm wondering if you could also speak about the structural barriers that women in Canada are facing. We talked a bit about child care. I'm wondering if there are others that might come to mind. We have heard about accessible housing being an issue. I'm wondering if you could speak to some of those barriers.

Prof. Kathleen A. Lahey: Yes.

To the extent that women in Canada do have access to economic support and resources, it's increasingly being taken up just with survival spending. Women on social assistance really don't have enough money to get child care that helps them get out the door in order to take advantage of things like the working income tax benefit, or other resources that may be available.

The problem with housing is that while the price of real estate is going up and rental is going up, social assistance payments are not keeping track with that. In addition, the social funding envelope, such as the Canada child tax benefit and so on, does not treat women as individuals. Women do not have access, as a matter of right, to a full living source of income should they have to go on their own. Nor does the route of applying for child support and alimony hold out much in the way of a solution. Women are increasingly caught in very tight economic conditions that make it difficult, structurally, for them to get out of the house and do the paid work needed to fill in the gaps left by a shrinking social safety net.

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Thank you very much, Ms. Ashton.

Ms. Ambler, you have seven minutes.

[*English*]

Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, to all of you, for being here today to inform our study.

Ms. Beckton, I'm wondering if you could talk to us a little more about your partnership with Equal Voice. We know a bit about the work they do in encouraging women to run for office. I am wondering about your connection with Equal Voice.

Ms. Clare Beckton: Obviously, the centre is interested in women in political leadership—what we define as public leadership—which is both corporate and government writ large.

With regard to our work with Equal Voice, this is funded by a foundation. We are creating a portal of research that looks at women in politics in Canada. When that portal is launched, which should be next month, that will make that research readily accessible. You'll be

able to look at the barriers, the challenges, that women face in seeking political office.

Then, our plan is to seek some funding to have some of that material taken from the academic articles and put into work that's accessible for candidates seeking office that will help them. We think that's necessary. Often there is the research, but it's not readily accessible to people who need it.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Can you give us a sneak preview as to what some of the barriers might be?

Ms. Clare Beckton: We know that one of the barriers is getting nominated in the first place. I've spoken to a number of candidates in recent times who ran into challenges in the nomination process. Women often hesitate, unless they're asked to jump into the ring. They don't necessarily have the same number of Rolodexes that a lot of male candidates have in order to seek funding, which is important. I'm sure many of you have faced those similar challenges.

There are also the challenges that women face with regard to how they self-promote, because of the existing cultural norms about what's appropriate for women and how they should behave. That still exists.

The final one, of course, is that we all know that sometimes the media will focus on issues relating to women and whether they're apart from their family or otherwise. They ask questions which they would never ask of men.

There are a lot of different challenges.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: They still do ask those questions.

Ms. Clare Beckton: When Lisa MacLeod, for example, had a baby, there were questions raised about how she was going to have a baby and still be going back and forth....

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Absolutely.

There's been a lot of talk at this committee in our study about networking, and I like the way you put it—Rolodexes.

Ms. Clare Beckton: The old-fashioned statement. We don't use it anymore.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: We know what you mean, and it's actually a good way to put it. We can all picture what that looks like, and we know that we need long lists of contacts in order to be able to fundraise and win those nominations.

You mentioned self-promoting, and when you were speaking earlier, you talked about critical thinking. When we spoke offline, you and I discussed different styles of communicating. Is that what you were referring to by "critical thinking"? You pointed out that sometimes—and please correct me if I'm not paraphrasing accurately—a women's focus is a little more scattered, which said in a more positive way, I think, means we multi-task.

Do you think this is necessarily a bad thing, and how can our different styles be accommodated?

•(1635)

Ms. Clare Beckton: Right, and I'm not sure I would use the term "scattered". I think that women tend to look more broadly when you have an issue. For example, in the corporate world, when a woman comes into a boardroom full of men to talk about a project and some concerns with that project, she might talk about the broad concerns. The men are focused on the deadline and wanting to get it out, and so they may not hear her concerns because of where she's focused.

There has been a great deal of work done by Barbara Annis & Associates. She's written a number of books on gender intelligence and on how men and women's brains work differently. In that, the evidence shows that men and women often do approach things differently, and that's important. It shows up in some of the leadership studies that have been done, for example, in *Women Matter 3*, a report done by McKinsey & Company. It's a report that I recommend because it looks at what kinds of leadership attributes women tend to exercise more frequently than men and vice versa, and how that plays into the kind of leadership that is needed in Canada today when you have to deal with the multiplicity of complex issues.

What it does support is that you need gender-inclusive leadership because of the way men and women approach issues differently.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Speaking of those leadership traits, are those the kinds of topics we might see on the agenda at that one-week intensive leadership seminar you referred to?

Ms. Clare Beckton: We will have a piece in there on gender intelligence—and of course, anyone that has a spouse knows how useful gender intelligence can be.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Gender intelligence.

What other kinds of topics are discussed in the one-week seminar that specifically would benefit women?

Ms. Clare Beckton: One is how women can navigate the system. For example, one of the challenges that women face in leadership is not having sponsors, whereas the men are often sponsored and that's how they advance in organizations. Women have not been able to get sponsors or they haven't been sponsored. There's also the question of how women can access mentors, for example, and how to look at who has influence in an organization, how to get involved in the kind of work that will bring them to the attention where they then can be considered for a promotion, for example. These are some of the things covered in the seminar. But we also look at visioning, the inner journey involved, as well as the regular leadership things. Networking and how important it is is another one.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you very much, it is greatly appreciated.

Mr. Casey, you have seven minutes.

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

[English]

Ms. Beckton, Ms. Cornish, and Chief Kennedy, I wasn't here for your opening statements. I was a last-minute replacement for Dr. Duncan, but as is her way, she made copious notes of your presentation and of her advice to me. If my question seems a little bit

awkward or misinformed, it's probably because I'm not reading it correctly, but I'll do my best.

Professor Lahey, I did hear your presentation and I'd like to start with you.

I was interested in your comments on income splitting, a matter that has received some attention and debate, I would say, in the public, but probably more prominently within the Conservative caucus. You touched on it in your opening statement. Could you expand a little bit and explain, if I understand it correctly, your view that the proposal for income splitting would have a negative effect on the prosperity of Canadian women?

Prof. Kathleen A. Lahey: Yes, it will have a negative effect in a number of ways.

First of all, the \$2.7 billion federal cost for it will probably be accompanied by something like a \$1.7 billion cost provincially and territorially, wherever other governments enact income splitting along with the federal government's program. So we're talking about \$4.4 billion out of Canada's economy each year, as a minimum, that will be paid basically to reward women who put more of their efforts into unpaid work.

For women who need to have a minimum economic capacity of their own, that is, the ability to go into the labour market and earn money in some way, should life make it necessary for them to support themselves—and I think that's probably 100% of all women at some point in their lives—this means that women are essentially being bribed in a way to participate in a program that is not in their best interests.

In addition to that, people might say, "Well, women will get the benefits of income splitting too", but there are two reasons that is not the case.

First of all, even the highest income women in this country will receive only a small proportion of those benefits compared to the men. I've done some simulation analysis using SPSPD/M software produced by Statistics Canada to get these figures. Although 25% of all women in couples will get some benefit from income splitting into their own hands, they will only get 16% of the dollars. So 84% of the total \$4.4 billion is going to go directly into men's hands.

The second effect that is negative for women is that there's a great deal of social research demonstrating that if a government has a choice between putting social benefits into the hands of the male in a couple or the female in a couple, or shared control over the fund, it will normally benefit the family as a whole more to give women at least half of the control over the money, if not all of it, because they tend to spend the money on things like the needs of children, the needs of the family, and so on. But if you put these tax benefits, such a huge amount of money, into the hands of men, because they will be the ones receiving sole control over the tax refunds from income splitting, then it creates a situation in which men will feel a sense of greater entitlement to decide how that money will be used, and it won't necessarily be used to meet the needs of all of the members of the household equally.

•(1640)

Mr. Sean Casey: Both in your opening remarks and in the answer you just gave, you referenced unpaid work. The result of these meetings will be a summary of the evidence and some recommendations for government. What recommendations would you urge upon us with respect to unpaid work?

Prof. Kathleen A. Lahey: I would recommend that this committee look for political strategies that would increase the sharing of unpaid work. Human beings have to perform a certain amount of unpaid work every day in order to support themselves and their households. But it has been very clearly demonstrated that when policies are used to incentivize sharing of unpaid work instead of incentivizing the allocation of unpaid work to the lower income person in the household, who is almost always a woman, men's work lives do indeed become easier. They get to spend more time on unpaid work, which tends to be more freely governable time on their own. It also gives women more free time in which to consider increasing their participation in paid work. So sharing of unpaid work, to the point where it gets to the 50-50 point, is absolutely crucial to being able to move forward.

There are proven strategies for doing this. For example, in some of the Scandinavian countries, when a child is born the father's entitlement to paid leave is sometimes tied to his income-earning capacity, which actually gives him more of a realistic economic reward for withdrawing from paid work for short periods of time to take care of children. In some countries, women's access to additional parental leave is contingent on men taking their share, because many men don't want to take their share as they know that it may withdraw them from paid work and endanger their prospects of advancement and promotion.

Mr. Sean Casey: Ms. Cornish, I have a similar question for you on a different topic, and that is recommendations you would urge upon us. I understand that one of the topics you touched on in your remarks was pay equity. What recommendations would you suggest we make to government with respect to pay equity?

•(1645)

Ms. Mary Cornish: I have set them out under 10 different steps in the actual brief, but the first one is that there needs to be an overall national plan for closing the gender pay gap.

On page 6 of the brief I talk about how the federal government and other governments have system-wide and national strategies they develop for key matters, particularly those that cross governmental, municipal, provincial, and national boundaries. I used it as an example to get people thinking. There is a federal sustainable development strategy, which is something that crosses municipal borders—

The Chair: You have a wealth of information. Unfortunately, this is all the time we have for this question, but thank you for referring to your brief, which is very informative and will help the member

[*Translation*]

to give more details.

Ms. O'Neill Gordon, you have five minutes.

[*English*]

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon (Miramichi, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I want to welcome all of you here with us this afternoon. You certainly have thrown out a lot of information to all of us that will be of great benefit to us in this study.

My first comment is for Clare Beckton. I just want to say that I wish to reiterate your message about women not just jumping in for the nomination. What I see first-hand is that a lot of them certainly have the ability, but what they are lacking is confidence in themselves.

I'm wondering what steps you take with your centre to build up their confidence, or are there other major steps I don't see as clearly that are also stopping them from jumping in?

Ms. Clare Beckton: I think one thing is generally women wait to be asked. This was found in the United States as well. I'm part of the Harvard Women's Leadership Board, and we looked at some of the work that's being done to encourage women to run in the United States. They did have an ask campaign to have women asked.

I think the question of self confidence is something we do. I do workshops often with women around owning your success, and part of it is helping them understand how to be able to speak in those environments, and be able to step to the plate, and take the kind of risks that are needed in a political career.

I think women also are very conscious as you all are, the many women around this table, of the challenges facing politicians, and the kind of things you have to deal with in your ridings and your constituencies, and that can be very difficult for women particularly with families.

We do, and we have been as I say, doing some of this research, but I also personally do a lot of workshops around helping women to be able to have that confidence to be able to speak up and engage, whether it's in politics or in leadership capacities in other organizations.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Do you feel we're making progress in this area?

Ms. Clare Beckton: I think the evidence we did in our benchmark study, which I have in front of you, showed there had been progress, but very slow. It was a study from 1987 to 2011.

I think when you look at the proportion of women in federal politics and in provincial politics, we're still well under-represented, both federally and in all of the provinces, some much greater under-representation than others. I think your own province of New Brunswick is one that women are very under-represented in the provincial legislatures for example.

So the progress is very uneven, and in the case of politics it's geography. Geography has affected it to a certain extent as well.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: I know. I've been involved in the local area, and as you will see, you're not going to see too many women come out and get on the executive because they just feel they don't have anything to offer. That is something where I feel we have to strive.

Ms. Clare Beckton: This is a challenge that we face across many areas where women who are very competent—it's kind of a cultural norm in many ways—think they do not have anything to say, or they will say that somebody else is more qualified than they are. I think we do have to encourage women to look at their own strengths and their own qualifications and step forward and take these things on because women are very qualified to do these jobs.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: And once they get in there, they prove themselves time and time again. It's just a matter of getting them to take that step, to jump in there.

My next question is for Betsy Kennedy. What are some of the barriers that first nations women face when they are pursuing jobs or when they're going into higher education? They certainly face a lot of barriers, a lot of challenges. What are some of the challenges they face that first nations men don't face, and why?

• (1650)

Chief Betsy Kennedy: Well I guess it's hard for the women to find employment because they have children; they believe that men don't have children. So I guess that's one of the reasons they're not employed. For the women to work, it's very difficult because they also have to go home right away to look after the children. So it's really twice as hard for them, I'd say. I know that for me it was very hard.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: So the fact there are children involved and they feel committed to the child care is the main issue that causes them not to get involved.

Chief Betsy Kennedy: Yes.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Sellah, you have five minutes.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Thank you, Madam Chair.

First of all, I would like to thank the witnesses for being here.

As you know, we are currently studying the economic leadership and prosperity of Canadian Women. Of course, we want to find concrete solutions to improve conditions for working women in Canada.

My question is for Ms. Lahey.

From the testimony given by a number of witnesses since the beginning of our study, we have learned that there is still a salary gap. We know that a woman earns 60 % of the salary paid to a man and that it would take 69 years to bridge that gap. It is not that women do not have access to upper management positions in the public and private sectors as well as in non-profit organizations. Rather, there is systemic discrimination because of all the factors that have been listed.

According to your chart, the current total cost to the federal government is \$6.7 billion. You mentioned that with this money, a policy for the provision of day care services in a productive economy would have much more of an effect on the Canadian economy than simply receiving these services through tax credits.

Could you please explain your thoughts on this issue?

[English]

Prof. Kathleen A. Lahey: I'd be happy to.

Reinvesting the \$6.7 billion that I reference in these notes would have a beneficial impact on the Canadian economy, because it would, first of all, provide resources for more women to meet their own economic needs and those of their families by entering into paid work with fewer constraints on the hours they could work, how far away from home they could work, and so on—all of the barriers that I know everyone in this room has become very familiar with. There's a second benefit to moving in the direction of providing greater structured, accessible childcare, and other caring resources as well, in the Canadian context. Canada, like other countries of its general demographic structure, has large care needs, and they will be growing in the future as demographics change. As that sector grows, it will be important for it to grow in an economically healthy way—that is, with full-time, permanent, well-paid work for people moving into paid care positions. If that were to happen, then the economy would grow not only because women would be entering into paid work in larger numbers but also because more jobs would be created. Jobs and money flows both add to economic growth.

A third benefit from restructuring the use of the \$6.7 billion is that when there is more money flowing in the economy from more people working and more people in new jobs, then governments have access to larger revenue flows at the same time. So then governments gain a greater sustainable source of funding for their own social and economic development programs. Research has demonstrated that in countries that move in this direction by encouraging larger arrays of options for child care, economic growth actually increases. The precise extent to which it increases depends on the specific economy in question, but in no country has the economy ever shrunk as a result of moving into paid child care resources supported by the government. The evidence in the Quebec context makes it very clear that there's a large multiplier effect. That's what I'm describing. You basically get three dollars of increased economic growth and revenue for every dollar that's put into childcare resources.

• (1655)

[Translation]

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: Thank you.

Do I have any time left, Madam Chair?

The Chair: You have 17 seconds.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: All right.

Ms. Lahey, do you believe that violence against women is a factor that hurts their prosperity?

[English]

Prof. Kathleen A. Lahey: Absolutely.

Women who face all forms of violence, whether in the workplace or in their homes, have greater economic needs than women who do not face violence.

[Translation]

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

Mr. Young, you have the floor for five minutes.

[English]

Mr. Terence Young (Oakville, CPC): Thank you, madam Chair.

Professor Lahey, welcome. It's nice to see you again. It's been, I think, 39 years since we last met at Osgoode Hall Law School.

I wanted to ask you about the tax policies that you mentioned—the universal child care benefit, dependent spouse tax credits, and pension income splitting. I'm a member of the government, and I just wanted to explain that those are designed to accommodate women and men, who may or may not be parents, with regard to choices in how they live together in a long-term relationship or marriage. My concern is that changing or eliminating these policies could remove that choice as to whether or not to work outside the home. In fact, instead of trying to accommodate the way people often want to live, it would be engineering by tax law how they live.

Is the choice of whether or not to work outside the home not a legitimate one? Secondary to that, does the Income Tax Act treat men and women equally or unequally?

Prof. Kathleen A. Lahey: Thank you for that short question.

Mr. Terence Young: Take as much time as you want. I have five minutes. I probably took one already.

Prof. Kathleen A. Lahey: The first point I would make is that, first of all, it is fine to say that the purpose of these policies is to create choices, but the reality is that the notion of choice, when circumstances constrain the number of options available to people, are false choices.

For example, the universal child care benefit, which provides a little bit over \$100 per month for every young child under the age of 6, is not enough money for someone to get out the door to earn enough money to do anything. It creates the illusion that someone can choose to stay at home with an allowance of a little bit over \$1,200 per year per child, but no one can live on \$1,200 per year, and it creates the illusion that a person can choose instead to spend that \$1,200 per year on child care. And that is also an illusion. So yes, there is a choice, but it's not a real choice.

One of the other policies you may describe as also being engineered by tax policy is income splitting. Income splitting is carefully designed and historically has always been carefully designed to keep more economic power in the hands of higher-income individuals. It arose from the English common law concept of coverture, which treated women as being part of their husband's beings, and therefore all incomes earned by the women as belonging to the men. Therefore, the concept that joint taxation or income splitting is not some sort of social engineering by tax policy ignores the long history that says that, in fact, it was deliberately designed as a way to keep economic control in the hands of men. Because Canada is a country that respects the principle of sex equality, that is not a policy that is considered to be constitutionally acceptable in democratic Canada.

• (1700)

Mr. Terence Young: Your chart on employment insurance payments is interesting. Is the gap in that chart a direct result of the jobs that women hold, the occupations they hold, and the hours they work? And if so, what solutions do you suggest?

Prof. Kathleen A. Lahey: Yes, this set of figures is a direct reflection of the fact that women have less full-time, full-year employment, and therefore have less eligibility for employment insurance. It also reflects the simultaneous fact of existing discrepancies in income and pay levels. Therefore, women who do qualify for employment insurance benefits will always get smaller benefits, and often these will be so small that the women cannot even support themselves with them. It would be better for them to go to even less well-paid work in order to simply get by, which is what happened during the depths of the recession.

The alternatives would be to eliminate the distinctions between full-time and part-time work, to insist that all work be paid at a living wage, and that it be calibrated at the real cost of human survival and not on the basis of some arbitrary measurement. It would also make sense to come up with more universalized support systems, so that people who do find that they are ineligible for employment insurance may, nonetheless, be able to access social assistance supports of various kinds that would secure their ability to keep functioning as healthy human beings.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you.

Thank you very much, Mr. Young.

Ms. Crockatt, you have the floor for five minutes.

[English]

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Thank you very much.

This has been a really phenomenally interesting study and I want to thank every one of you for your contributions. There are lots of nuggets that every one of you have contributed.

I would like to comment briefly on Mr. Young's point that some people have characterized income splitting as an answer to women doing unpaid work. I'm wondering, Dr. Lahey, if you in some way, in some corner of your mind, see that as the way some people see it, as a way of paying women who are choosing to stay home.

Prof. Kathleen A. Lahey: Yes, this has been suggested, but if that were truly the purpose, then why is it that women who live in households where the couple's total income is \$32,000 a year and less only get \$14 per year?

Similarly, for people who live in households where the incomes are in the middle range—\$68,000 to \$83,000 per year—why would the unpaid work being supported by that be worth only \$546? And why would it make sense then, where there's a single income earner with income of \$190,000 a year or more, that the woman's unpaid work in that household is suddenly worth \$12,000 a year?

If that were the purpose, someone got the numbers very badly wrong.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Thank you for that answer.

I'd like to go to...I don't know if it's Dr. or Mrs. or Ms. Beckton. How do you like to be referred to?

Ms. Clare Beckton: Ms. Beckton is fine.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Okay.

We've heard a bit about women choosing the occupations they're most comfortable with and also that either some of those may be lower-paid occupations or women are being paid less because those are occupations that women are filling. We don't necessarily know here, but in our last committee meeting we heard some very interesting testimony from Christine Day, the former CEO of Lululemon, who was talking about leadership coming from "living on the edge of what you're comfortable with".

We used to think it was education that was the barrier, the problem, so we all started getting our girls into universities and getting them higher education and higher degrees, and now we've discovered that it's really not a supply problem, and it's not an education problem, so I'm wondering, what is it? Is it an attitudinal problem? How do you see us... What is going to work to get women into a higher level of prosperity?

• (1705)

Ms. Clare Beckton: I think it is in part an educational problem. Why I say this is that women are still in many cases choosing to go the routes in university that will take them into the traditional occupations, such as public administration, teaching, and nursing, where they tend to get lower pay. They are staying away from industries like high technology, some of the kinds of engineering, and some of the scientific fields. That does stem from how women are acculturated during their years in school and how guidance counsellors advise them, because whenever I speak to young women, I find that they have not been encouraged to go into some of these non-traditional occupations that have higher pay.

That is one factor that does relate to the education system at the elementary and high school levels, because once they're into university and into particular disciplines, it's much harder to switch when job opportunities come up. If you look at where the jobs are right now, you'll see that a lot of jobs are in the high-tech and the scientific innovation fields, and these tend to be higher-paying jobs, so women are suffering economically from that.

The second level, of course, is that when they go into a lot of the industries, there are still many barriers within those organizations, and they're barriers that relate to how women are perceived in terms of leadership roles.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Could you move that ahead? I'm conscious of the time, and I want to hear your answer about what your recommendations would be, then, based on your extensive experience, for how we actually can help women catapult into those kinds of leadership roles. You're also saying that our economy needs women in leadership positions. What do you recommend we do?

Ms. Clare Beckton: I think one of the things, for example, when you look at boards, is to make recommendations around how you get more women on boards. In some countries, they've gone for quotas. In some countries, they've gone for targets. In some countries—and Ontario is looking at this—they've gone for the comply-or-explain approach in terms of having diversity policies and getting more women on your boards. This can also be applicable to senior levels in industry. The federal and the provincial governments can provide leadership in encouraging an augmentation of women in these senior level positions and, in particular, board positions.

There are a number of programs now. Diversity 50, which is part of the Canadian Board Diversity Council, certifies 50 people a year who are board-ready, and the majority of those are women. There are some diversity candidates and within the women, there's a stream of not just—

The Chair: That's great. Very good.

Ms. Clare Beckton: Also, now I know that we're going to have more aboriginal women and men in that group.

It's these the kinds of things that can be.... As well, the federal and provincial governments can also lead by example.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Thank you very much, Ms. Crockatt.

Mr. Casey, you have the floor for five minutes.

Mr. Sean Casey: Thank you, Madam Chair.

[*English*]

Ms. Cornish, you got shortchanged there in my rambling question, so I want to come back to you and see if I can't focus the question a little better.

With respect to pay equity and the three most important things you would like to see the committee recommend—if you can limit it to three—what are the biggest elements within that issue?

Ms. Mary Cornish: I think the first one is to develop a plan, to commit as a government to analyzing the situation and to developing a plan similar to how the EU embeds, in its economic strategies and in its women's equality strategies, pay equity. Other countries have done this. They have planning. They integrate it into their planning. That would require the federal government to cooperate with provincial jurisdictions as well. So that's the first thing.

The federal sustainable development strategy talks about three kinds of elements that I think you could adapt. One of them is what is called an integrated whole-of-government picture of actions and results. In that strategy it's environmental sustainability, and here it's closing the gender gap. There's also the link between that and your expenditure planning. In other words, you're making some very concrete connections, and that includes—as I'll get to in a moment—effective measurement and reporting as part of that plan. So that's the first aspect of it.

The second aspect of it is incorporating into government decision-making a "closing the gender pay gap" analysis as part of the gender-based analysis you do. That means in fact saying, "Is the government policy contributing to closing the gender pay gap, is it doing nothing at all to the pay gap, or is it widening it?" We need to know that before we engage in government decision-making. That's another aspect of it that you would look at. That includes the budgeting, whether budgetary measures have those kinds of impacts, both in terms of trying to do positive measures.... I would see child care expenditures as something that would help contribute to closing the gender pay gap.

I think the other thing to look at as well is the leadership role that the public sector can play. Generally around the world, the public sector has had an equalizing effect. There is generally a lower gender pay gap within the public sector. It generally has more progressive employment policies than the private sector does. It has a whole equalizing effect through leadership, which I think is important to keep in mind. This is particularly in relation to where you have privatization; it tends to sometimes destroy that equalizing effect, because when women are laid off into the private sector, often they lose a variety of the benefits they had in public sector employment, which has led to their lower pay gap.

The other final one is the issue of pay transparency. This was one of the key things the European Union did in its latest Equal Pay Day, in February. They required that by December 2015, EU states will report on how they are making pay transparency an obligation with respect to employers. It could be done in a number of different ways.

So one of the other ways the federal government could act is in requiring federally regulated public sector employers, and also federal contractors in terms of contract compliance, to be transparent about their pay. President Obama just issued an executive order with respect to that on the Equal Pay Day in the U.S. in April, talking about it with respect to federal contractors in the U.S. over which they had direct power. But it's one thing that could be done here.

Essentially what the EU talks about is that women shouldn't be paid less because they don't know what males with jobs within the workplace are being paid, and that there shouldn't be pay secrecy policies, which often serve to reinforce pay inequities. Either women don't speak up because they don't actually know what the pay policies are in a workplace, or they may come in and actually be paid differently for the same work: the male was paid more before coming in, asks for what he was previously paid, and someone agrees to pay him that or puts him on a higher step. There's a whole series of reasons why pay transparency is now one of the more innovative ways of trying to get at the pay gap.

• (1710)

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Ms. Young, you have the floor for seven minutes.

[English]

Ms. Wai Young: Thank you very much for all of your testimony. You have hit some really interesting and very diverse points to this big question that we're trying to grapple with in this particular study.

I'm going to very quickly ask each of you a question, and I hope you can answer it within the limited time. If not, I hope you do know that you can send in additional comments, even after today. Our committee is obviously very open to receiving and hearing about your expertise and your experiences.

Just to follow up on what you were saying, Ms. Cornish, you were talking about pay transparency. I have experienced this myself—running my own consulting firm, etc.—where men were the boss and women were just bossy, right? As well, when women ask for equal pay, they're asking for too much or whatever, which I think is unfortunately, as you said, an issue that's still out there.

How do we grapple with that? What is your one recommendation, as a low-hanging fruit recommendation, that you can give to us in terms of how we do something around that area?

Ms. Mary Cornish: If you look at page 7 of the brief, it sets out some of the things that the European Union has done. Some of them include just making an employee write to request the information. If they request the information, they have to be given it. And it breaks it down, explaining within a workplace what the ranges of pay are with respect to various jobs. So that's one possible way of doing it.

Another is for an employer to report the average remuneration in jobs, and then to report it by gender. That's another way of doing it. It's a second way that the European Union talks about it. You're not talking necessarily about naming a specific person, but rather, what the job title is, how much it pays, and whether there is a difference—

• (1715)

Ms. Wai Young: Transparency, obviously, is the issue here. But beyond transparency, given that you now know that you're not being paid as much, obviously, there are some steps or some tool kit things—training, mentorship and so on—that need to happen in order to address that. It's knowing one thing and getting to a place where you can actually have impact or change it. It necessitates a number of steps—that is what I'm trying to say.

Ms. Mary Cornish: Exactly.

Ms. Wai Young: Because I'm pressed for time—I have a number of other questions—can you put some thought to that or send that additional stuff to us, because I think that is a piece of action that we would love to see.

Ms. Mary Cornish: I'd be glad to.

Ms. Wai Young: With that sort of action, knowing is one thing; doing is another.

For Ms. Beckton, then, I would like to ask about women in politics and public leadership. We've talked about mentorship and the importance of leadership for decades. As we know, there's a Women's Executive Network, that there are all of these things happening. How is it that we can use social media and/or the fact that we have an incredible amount of new media to take that big leap? In previous panels before this committee we've had young women who are doing amazing things.

How are we able to apply or take what is existing now and take that giant leap, which I think we can, from beyond the boardroom to do more mentorship in a very broad and public way?

Ms. Clare Beckton: I think there are a number of ways. I'm not a social media expert, but it's by bringing to the attention of a lot of the younger women some of the role models and some of the achievements, both of their generation and the older generation. It's bringing to public awareness, through the media, the kinds of things you described, the bossy notion, and how that has been brought to public attention, so that people start to think about what it means when you call a woman bossy, what it means when you call a woman aggressive. I think those are the kinds of things that can be done. But it's also to create the awareness of role models and to try to change some of that gender stereotyping that exists about what women should do or what their roles should look like compared to men's roles.

There's tremendous opportunity because young women are certainly influenced. Right now there's a lot of focus on beauty and body shape, and if it can be changed to also reflect on their opportunities and their roles....

Ms. Wai Young: So that is the next thing I want to ask about as a subquestion of sorts. Again, I don't think we have time for you to address it, but I would love it if Carleton University, or any of your groups or organizations....

We seem to be going backwards in our culture—and I say this as someone with a sociology degree—because here we are, on the one hand, saying that we want to advance women, etc., and yet on the other hand in North America and Canada young girls are being encouraged by our culture to be dressed and presented, as you all know, as skinny, and beautiful, etc. We just recently did a study on bulimia and eating disorders and all of that.

Why are we, 30, 40, certainly 60 years later, still needing to bust that myth, still working on it, and appear to be going backwards in fact? I know that the Status of Women minister is very concerned about this issue. I know that there are some huge sociological, cultural things that we're not getting at, beyond the mentorship, beyond all of these wonderful things that we're doing, that we need to get at as a society in order to really bust this out.

Again, we would appreciate some thoughts, even some program proposals on this. I know the department would love that.

The Chair: There is just a minute left for them to answer.

Ms. Wai Young: Okay.

I'd like to ask Chief Kennedy specifically about her views on first nations education and whether her band, obviously, and others across this country should be running their own education systems, which is one of the things our government is pushing for. Could you give me a very quick response because I do have a question for Ms. Lahey as well.

Chief Betsy Kennedy: I think it's very important that we be given the opportunity to realize our own education, because we know what our people want.

Ms. Wai Young: So you support first nations education programs?

• (1720)

Chief Betsy Kennedy: Yes.

Ms. Wai Young: Great.

Can you send us something on that too? That would be absolutely wonderful.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Ms. Wai Young: I've run out of time. I'm sorry.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Young.

Ms. Ashton, you have the floor for seven minutes.

[*English*]

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I just want to follow up on that point and to be clear that the question on the record was clearly not about the first nations education act. In speaking of changing the subject in committee, I want to make sure that we're not trying to hoodwink witnesses.

Chief Kennedy, I'm wondering if you could speak to one of the barriers that we hear that women across the county face but that we, on our part, are aware that indigenous women face in greater numbers. That's the lack of housing, and how overcrowded housing and an insufficient housing stock may be a barrier to aboriginal women's prosperity. Could you speak to that and the situation in northern first nations like yours?

Chief Betsy Kennedy: It's very hard for a family to receive housing, especially the young ones, because the older ones don't want to move out of their homes. We are only given a limited amount of funding for housing to be built.

As a matter of fact, in my community I'm only allowed one house every five years, and then the growth rate of the population in aboriginal communities is a lot higher than that. It hinders their education and also their life because they live in these crowded conditions and they have to live with the mould and other things. I just recently found out why mould is there. There's constantly somebody using the washroom or there is somebody usually cooking, and then there's no air, and the houses are old.

Many of us live in homes without running water, which is difficult. One of our elders was walking home carrying water. No matter what we do it's never enough. Our children are going to wind up getting very sick, in the way of more asthma and skin conditions. They're having problems with their skin. As a matter of fact, when all these problems are there, families wind up getting frustrated and angry, because money that they would like to buy food with goes elsewhere.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you for that.

Given that we're talking about supporting indigenous women and other Canadian women's prosperity, do you think that the federal government needs to step up its commitment to indigenous women in our country?

Chief Betsy Kennedy: Yes.

There was education training available to many people, and the aboriginal women had a hard time trying to access the program because they didn't meet the criteria. We all thought it was going to be a good thing, especially for aboriginal women, because then they can have these daycares that could be paid for, but they still couldn't even go out for training. A lot of them really want to work and find and buy some things to make life better for their children. It's difficult for them, as they just don't meet the criteria.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you very much.

Speaking of the role of the federal government, in particular the status of women department, sadly we've become quite good in this committee at coming up with recommendations that leaves Status of Women off the hook. I'm wondering if, Ms. Cornish, you might be able to speak to the importance of Status of Women Canada showing leadership, whether in terms of pay equity or other measures, to achieve equality for women in Canada and prosperity.

Ms. Mary Cornish: Generally around the world in ministries such as that, there is a minister responsible and a department that are in fact the institutional mechanism by which a gender and equality strategy is implemented. That's the first part of it. They are supposed to be in charge of implementing it.

For example, if you had a national closing-the-gender-gap plan, then you would have the leadership of a Status of Women committee doing it, and in addition—and this is the important thing—a status of women branch, department, and minister should not be marginalized, in the sense that each of the other ministers has to play a role in the plan so it isn't marginalized as well. In other words, yes, they play a very important role, but the finance minister has to play a very important role and the finance minister has to make sure they are involved in it.

For example, in Ontario I met with the head finance people in the bureaucracy about trying to do a closing-the-gender-pay-gap plan in 2008 around the time of the recession. They couldn't really understand what I was talking about. "What do you mean we should be involved? What would we do?" I was saying, "Well even if you were using infrastructure money, you should be sorting out if you are employing women in that infrastructure money. Are you doing things with the infrastructure money that would help to close the gap? Are you building child care centres with it? Is the bridge you're building actually going to help women's employment in that community?"

These are the kinds of things that actually need to be embedded in government decision-making and in policy decision-making. In all ministries within government, people need to be trained how to think about that kind of gender-based analysis and to incorporate it into their thinking.

• (1725)

Ms. Niki Ashton: Thank you.

We have just one minute left. Professor Lahey, could you respond as well on the same point?

Prof. Kathleen A. Lahey: Yes, I'm glad you mentioned the infrastructure issue because in some of the European countries during the recession infrastructure funding was deliberately allocated toward building new facilities for care, for early childhood

education, for elder care, and some infrastructure funding was allocated to pay the salaries and the long-term training programs that went along with expanding employment in that sector. That really was a tremendous boost in countering the effects of the recession for women who had been marginalized through layoffs and so on, and created new employment and helped that country pull ahead of Canada in the gender equality rankings internationally, even though it's not as rich or as far developed economically as Canada is by any means.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Professor Lahey.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Truppe, you have the floor for the few minutes that we have left, I do not know exactly how many.

[*English*]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Thank you.

Sorry, how many minutes do I have?

The Chair: You have probably two and a half minutes.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: I'm just going to pass it off to Ms. Ambler for a minute and a half, and then a minute to Ms. Young, if that's okay.

Thank you.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Beckton, I want to follow up on some of the comments you made about cultural norms, particularly as they relate to family-friendly child care policies. You feel they're usually benefiting women only, which becomes a problem, so I'd like you to expand on that if you can.

The only example I know of—and I hope you could give another problematic one—is Lisa MacLeod. Again, we discussed this member of provincial parliament earlier and the idea that because of her and her actions, question period in the Ontario Legislature was changed from mid-afternoon to morning. I always wondered how that benefited women in particular, but maybe you could explain.

Ms. Clare Beckton: On your first question with family-friendly policies that are often put in corporate policies or even in government policies, if the family-friendly one is really focused on ensuring that women can take care of family obligations, what it does is tend to reinforce that women should be the primary caregivers.

The other thing that also happens is that when men do not feel that they're able to take this kind of leave themselves, it tends to discourage them from taking leave and, as a result, it's the women who take it.

We did a focus group in the mining sector where, for example, the men said that they were not prepared to step back and take time for family because they were afraid of the ramifications for their careers. In the federal government there is a top-up, whether it's a woman or a man who works, that is very encouraging for both men and women to take that time. I think we need to be thinking about those kinds of things.

Employers really need to focus on how they also encourage the aspirations of men with respect to family obligations as well as women because that will help the women at the end of the day. If men cannot freely take that time, then it discourages the women.

• (1730)

The Chair: Go ahead very briefly, Madame Truppe.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Ms. Young had a quick question.

Ms. Wai Young: It's very quick. Thank you.

Professor Lahey, I just want to finish my questions for the panel.

It's very quick, and I know that you probably don't have time to respond, but perhaps you can send something in. Certainly your response to the last question was very interesting.

We've been asking panel members not only to look at the amount of program funding within the Status of Women, because that's a very limited amount of money, but also at whether you and/or other people have studied funds that have gone to support women for economic and other successes across the federal government. In your last answer, as I said, you talked about building more infrastructure for community centres, etc. At a macro level, across the board, how have we done in moving the agenda forward with things like skilled trades training, for example?

I know that on the employment side at HRSDC, they have done a lot of targeted women's skills training and that type of thing.

So if you could send something in to us to capture that, it would be great.

The Chair: Thank you.

I think it's a very large question and a very large endeavour.

Ms. Lahey, if you can provide any information you have on that... but I understand this is a very large endeavour, and I think one professor, although mighty, may not be able to answer the whole thing.

[*Translation*]

To all the witnesses, I would like to sincerely thank you for your testimony and for the information that you have provided for our study.

Our next meeting will take place next Wednesday, at the same time.

The meeting is adjourned.

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