



# The Catholic Women's League of Canada

## MEMO

**DATE:** September 24, 2021

**FROM:** Glenda Carson, national chairperson of legislation

**TO:** Parish chairpersons of legislation

**CC:** Parish presidents, diocesan presidents, provincial presidents and life members (on request)

“Let us pray for rulers,’ that they govern us well. That they bring our homeland, our nations, our world, forward, to achieve peace and the common good” (Pope Francis).

The start of fall has always brought me a feeling of change in the air, of re-starting the year anew. This year, the notion of “new” is truly part of the legislation standing committee. Not only is it the start of a new term for many provincial and diocesan executive councils and me, but also for the federal government. The call for a federal election on August 15<sup>th</sup> resulted in the dissolution of parliament. All business of the House of Commons and the Senate ceased, only to resume after the election on September 20<sup>th</sup>. More than 200 bills before the House of Commons and the Senate did not achieve royal assent before August 15<sup>th</sup>. These bills now require resubmission, and their review process will need to start all over again. Needless to say, the reintroduction of these bills will depend on how the new government’s agenda embraces their importance and the legislative visions of the newly elected members of parliament.

Some of the bills lost due to the dissolution of parliament were specific to the work and interest of the League, given their focus on the environment, vulnerable persons in society, Internet pornography and human trafficking. These lost bills present a need for astute monitoring of the new parliamentary session as it moves forward. They may come back with different numbers and titles, presented within a different context or not reintroduced at all.

### **Bills lost from the House of Commons:**

- **C-28:** *Strengthening the Environmental Protection for a Healthier Canada.* This act would have recognized the right of every individual to a healthy environment.
- **C-35:** *An Act to reduce poverty and to support the financial security of persons with disabilities by establishing the Canada disability benefit and making a consequential amendment to the Income Tax Act.*
- **C-201:** *An Act to develop a national school food program for children*

- **C-215:** *An Act respecting Canada's fulfillment of its greenhouse gas emissions reduction obligations* in accordance with the Paris Agreement.
- **C-306:** *An Act respecting the development of a national perinatal mental health strategy.* This bill supported a national strategy to protect the mental health needs of pregnant women and new parents.

**Bills lost from the Senate:**

- **S-216:** *Modern Slavery Act* focused on preventing and reducing the risk of forced child labour being used at any step in the production or importation of goods in Canada.
- **S-228:** *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (trafficking in persons)* sought to specify what constitutes exploitation when establishing whether a person has committed the offence of trafficking in persons.

Reflecting on the sheer number of bills that come forward to the House of Commons and the Senate, it is easy to see how the work of the legislation standing committee can be overwhelming and requires an understanding of the parliamentary process. At the beginning of this term, a workshop was circulated to provincial chairpersons of legislation for further distribution. It was developed by immediate past National Chairperson of Legislation Betty Colaneri (2018-2021) in response to requests through the parish annual reports. The workshop may also help foster reflection on what information would be helpful to members concerning provincial and municipal levels of government. However possible, please bring the information contained in this important new resource to your members, available at [cwl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/829b-Legislation-Workshop.pptx](http://cwl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/829b-Legislation-Workshop.pptx).

In closing, I extend to everyone the very best as you move forward in your legislation standing committee endeavours. I also pray that councils will soon find a “new normal” way of living with COVID-19 that will allow everyone the freedom to gather in person once again.

God bless you in your faithful work “For God and Canada.”