



October 4, 2013

The Office of the Secretary
Ontario Securities Commission
20 Queen Street West
22nd Floor
Toronto, Ontario M5H 3S8
Fax: 416-593-2318
Email: comments@osc.gov.on.ca

Re: Public Consultation regarding women on boards of and in senior management

Dear Secretary,

Thank you for seeking public comment on the recent proposal of the Ontario Securities Commission to increase the numbers of women on company boards of directors. We at Equal Voice Toronto are pleased to respond.

Equal Voice is a national multi-partisan non-governmental organization that advocates for the election of more women to public office in Canada's parliament, provincial legislatures and municipal councils. Equal Voice Toronto is the largest of the nine chapters across the country, with several hundred members and supporters. Our Toronto chapter is made up of women of all ages and diverse backgrounds and our activities reach across Ontario. We work with all political parties at Queen's Park to urge them to nominate more women to seek election; we host events to celebrate women in politics; and we develop programs to encourage women to seek public office in Ontario.

Our chapter supports the proposals developed by the OSC to advance women on corporate boards of directors. We see this as an excellent first step to increasing the involvement of women in governance. We believe that these initiatives, if implemented, will have an impact and will help encourage action to address the current poor representation of women on company boards. We urge that you extend the jurisdiction of your proposals as widely as possible.

We disagree with the critics of your proposals, some of whom believe that it is insulting to women to be so recognized. We believe exactly the opposite: that the status quo is not justified and must be changed. We also believe that there are women across Ontario and Canada who are well qualified to take on positions on company boards.

We think that your efforts to advance women in the private sector reinforce our efforts to advance women in politics. In both sectors, decisions are made that affect the lives and livelihood of all citizens. Women, who constitute half the population, are not just voters or consumers of private sector good and services, they must be more fairly and equally represented in decision-making bodies.

We urge you to go forward in advancing your proposals and we thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Lesley Byrne, Co-Chair, Toronto Chapter (c: 416-420-0481)
Rebecca Scott, Co-Chair, Toronto Chapter
Donna Dasko, Co-founder and Past National Chair (c: 647-282-5727)
Equal Voice



For more women in politics
www.equalvoice.ca