

News release

65 St. Clair Avenue East, Suite 400, Toronto, ON M4T 2Y8

Tel: 416-925-2493 Toll-Free: 1-800-268-7230 Fax: 416-925-7764



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Donna Marie Kennedy, President

Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association

Office: 416-925-2493 ext. 418

Cell: 416-662-5112

Amended Criminal Code could address violence against women

Ontario's Catholic Teachers are calling on the Harper government to support a Private Member's Bill that would add women to the groups protected under the Criminal Code law on hate propaganda. Liberal MP Borys Wrzesnewskyj, Etobicoke Centre, has vowed to re-introduce Bill C-254 *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (hate propaganda)* that was defeated by the Harper government on April 19, 2007. Protections under the Criminal Code currently only extend to those identified by colour, race, religion, ethnic origin and sexual orientation.

Donna Marie Kennedy President of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) says that the decision by the Harper Government to defeat the Bill, "would seem to deny that the girls and women could be better protected against many forms of violence. Violence against girls and women, cuts across class, race, ethnicity, culture and religion and is often so commonplace that it receives scant attention."

Kennedy says that legislation would convey the message that violence against women and girls is not tolerated in our society and would also help with enforcement and regulation.

OECTA is part of the Media Violence Coalition that also includes: the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, Canadian Centre for Abuse Awareness, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association, Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations, Ontario Principals' Council, Ontario Provincial Police, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, and Ontario Student Trustees' Association.

-30-

May 2, 2007