



March 19, 2018

Jennifer Beeman, Executive Director
Breast Cancer Action Québec
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Montréal QC H3N 1R4

The Honorable Catherine McKenna,
Minister of the Environment and Climate Change
Environment and Climate Change Canada
200 Sacré-Coeur Boulevard
Gatineau QC K1A 0H3

Dear Minister McKenna,

Our organization, [Breast Cancer Action Quebec](#), has been educating the public on the dangers of toxic substances and endocrine disrupting chemicals and their links to severe illnesses and health disorders for over twenty-five years. To that end, we have been closely following the consultations on the reform of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999. We strongly endorse the Report of the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development, *Healthy Canadians, Healthy Environment, Healthy Economy: Strengthening the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999*, which provides an excellent roadmap for the much-needed strengthening and updating of CEPA.

We are now mobilizing a broad network of civil society associations and groups from all sectors that are preoccupied by these issues to press for CEPA reform. These groups have committed to supporting our [Declaration](#) underscoring the important elements of CEPA that need reform. CEPA reform is not just an issue of the environment and human health: It is a question of social justice. Disadvantaged and disenfranchised populations are more vulnerable to the impacts of toxic substances and experience higher cumulative effects. But the problems are also gendered with women bearing more of the burden of responsibility for the family's health and its consumer choices that impact exposures to toxic substances that are not regulated by the current law.

So far, over 50 civil society groups have signed on to our Declaration. We have been impressed by the concern and commitment of these groups to our call for support. Together, they represent a vast swath of Quebec citizens, far beyond the traditional environmental movement. They include well-respected research centres, peri-natality groups, women's groups, workers' groups, shelters and groups that work against violence, student groups, literacy groups and cultural groups.

The almost complete lack of media coverage on CEPA reform would lead one to believe that the general public has little interest in the issue. Yet every time we give a presentation or, in this case, when we ask for support to encourage substantive reform of CEPA, the response is, without exception, one of deep concern for the issue. Indeed, we were able to garner this support in only two weeks and dozens more groups will likely sign on in the next several weeks as we continue our mobilization efforts.

The more Canadians know about toxic substances and EDCs, the more concerned they are. We beg to differ with the chemical and petrochemical industries and manufacturers who say we have the best chemical regulatory system in the world. They make these claims because it works for them. However, average Canadians are not convinced that they are adequately protected. Now is the time to show Canadians that the system will be reformed, transparency increased, burden of proof strengthened, and vulnerable populations protected.

We look forward to working with you as CEPA reform moves forward.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Beeman
Executive Director, Breast Cancer Action Quebec

CC: The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Minister of Health
The Honourable Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development
Deborah Schulte, Chair, Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development
Linda Duncan, Vice Chair, Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development
William Amos, Member, Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development
Don Davies, Health Critic (NDP)
Alexandre Boulerice, Environment Critic (NDP)

Dr. Dayna Nadine Scott, York University
Barbara McKinnon, New Brunswick Lung Association
Jean Zigby, Canadian Physicians for the Environment
Fe de Leon, Canadian Environmental Law Association
Muhannad Malas, Environmental Defence
Lisa Gue, David Suzuki Foundation
Elaine MacDonald, Ecojustice
Sydney Ribaux, Equiterre