



October 29, 2024

Honorable Michael Parsa, MPP, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services
Michael.Parsaco@pc.ola.org

Dear Minister Parsa,

Re: Protecting Ontario's Vulnerable in Cold Weather Conditions

I am writing on behalf of CFUW Ontario Council which is a provincial organization with 48 clubs across Ontario and 4,500 members. CFUW (Canadian Federation of University Women) is a voluntary, self-funded, non-profit, non-partisan women's organization whose members seek to provide life-long learning, to improve public policy and to advocate for gender equality and for the rights of women and girls.

CFUW Ontario Council recently held their Annual General Meeting in Windsor. At this meeting our members passed a resolution to urge the Ontario government and municipalities to open Warming Centres at 0°C, including windchill. There are insufficient Warming Centres to ensure the health and safety of vulnerable persons in our community.

We will be endeavoring to educate the public, and to partner with community organizations to address this issue.

THE ISSUES:

1. **Hypothermia** is a potentially lethal but highly preventable condition that can occur even during periods of temperatures at 0° C. Hypothermia is the most serious consequence for the vulnerable population during cold temperatures.
2. Cold exposure, especially over a **prolonged** period, can cause permanent damage, such as Chilblains, Trench Foot, Raynaud's Disease, Frostbite, Heart Disease, Diabetes, COPD and Mental Health complications.
3. The high cost to the health care system.

THE REQUEST:

1. That our provincial government and all municipalities budget for and develop a clear cold weather strategy by providing Warming Centres at 0° C, including windchill.
2. That these Warming Centres be open 24/7; that they be safe, available, at a designated and accessible location and equipped with appropriate washroom facilities.

Adopting a standard temperature across Ontario of 0°C, including windchill, at which point Warming Centres will open 24/7, is a necessary step in ensuring the health and safety of vulnerable individuals.

Thank you for your consideration of this serious proposal, and we thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely,

Sandra Shaw
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cc Monique Taylor, MPP
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