



## REFERRAL OF MEMBER MOTION BY CITY COUNCIL

### Continuing Toronto City Council's leadership on gender inclusion

<b>Date:</b>	September 12, 2014
<b>To:</b>	Executive Committee
<b>From:</b>	City Council
<b>Wards:</b>	All Wards

### City Council Decision

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City Council on August 25, 26, 27 and 28, 2014, referred Motion MM55.18 to the Executive Committee.

### Recommendations

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Councillor Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, seconded by Councillor Pam McConnell, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Government of Canada to change 'O Canada' to be gender inclusive, thereby including all Canadians.

### Summary

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This Motion seeks to reaffirm City Council's continued leadership and advocacy on gender inclusion by making O Canada gender inclusive. Toronto City Council's leadership on gender equity can be traced to efforts by former Mayors who supported efforts to gain women's right to vote, through use of civic facilities for meetings on Suffrage, through the elections of the first women as members of municipal councils in Canada (Constance Hamilton and Agnes MacPhail), and through the establishment of a Mayor's Task Force on the Status of Women to respond to the Recommendations of the 1970 Royal Commission on the Status of Women. These historical commitments by City Council have been strengthened in numerous ways through a range of programs, policies and partnership programs with community organizations. In addition, the City of Toronto has been a leader in building the capacity of women to participate in public life through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Regional Champions Program.

To further recognize the rights of women to be represented in all aspects of society, women's organizations and civil rights groups across Canada have endorsed the "Sing All Of Us" campaign which seeks to substitute the words "our sons" with "of us" in "O Canada". First written in 1908, the original words of the Anthem were gender neutral, with words "thou dost in us command". The words of "O Canada" were changed several times (1913, 1914, 1916, 1927 and 1980) by Judge R. Stanley Weir, who authored the original. It was not until July 1, 1980 that "O Canada" became Canada's anthem through the National Anthem Act. There have been nine private member's bills since 1980 urging the Government of Canada to make the National Anthem gender inclusive.

(Submitted to City Council on August 25 and 26, 2014 as MM55.18)

## **Communications (City Council)**

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(August 25, 2014) E-mail from Ed Lennox (MM.New.MM55.18.1)