

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM9.6	ACTION			Ward:All
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Honouring the Contribution of Canadian Women - by Councillor Mary Fragedakis, seconded by Councillor Sarah Doucette

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Mary Fragedakis, seconded by Councillor Sarah Doucette, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Bank of Canada to feature Canadian women on our bank notes in order to proudly reflect the important and valued contributions of Canadian women in our society.

Summary

It is important for women from Canadian history to be honoured on the symbols of our country - like bank notes.

Unfortunately, no current Canadian bank notes feature female Canadian historical figures. The only Canadian bank note to do so was replaced in 2011 by a new polymer note depicting an icebreaker.

That new \$50 bill replaced a bank note unveiled on October 13, 2004 by the Bank of Canada on the theme of national building. For the first time in Canadian history, Canadian women were featured on the note. The bill featured images of the Alberta women known as the Famous 5, as well as the renowned activist Thérèse Casgrain.

In July 2013, historian Merna Forster (author of 100 Canadian Heroines and 100 More Canadian Heroines) launched a national campaign calling for the Bank of Canada and the Minister of Finance to feature women from Canadian history on our bank notes. Some 60,000 people have signed a petition in support of this initiative.

Countries around the world celebrate female historical figures on their bills. A wonderful example comes from Australia. While one note features the Queen and the Parliament buildings, the other four each feature a notable Australian man on one side and a woman on the other.

Countries such as the United Kingdom, Columbia, Peru, Turkey, Venezuela, Mexico, Syria, Serbia, Japan, New Zealand, Philippines, Norway, Argentina, Sweden, and South Korea honour at least one woman from their respective countries. And Israel will soon celebrate two female authors on bank notes.

On July 24, 2013, the Bank of England announced that author Jane Austen would be featured on new £10 notes. Since 2001, Elizabeth Fry has been depicted on the reverse of £5 notes issued by the Bank of England.

When a national institution like the Bank of Canada fails to celebrate even a single woman from Canadian history on our notes, this is sexist. It clearly shows prejudice against Canadian women and is discriminatory.

Earlier this year, Montreal City Council passed a motion calling on the Bank of Canada and Canadian Mint to feature Canadian women.

Toronto as a City whose motto is "Diversity is our strength" should add its voice to this important national campaign as an acknowledgement of the poor representation of female persons on Canadian coins and bank notes.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM9.6