March 7, 2024 |

Statements

Celebrating International Women's Day by investing in women leaders

March 8 is International Women’s Day: a day when we remember, honour and celebrate the contributions of women (both cis and trans) and gender-diverse people in our communities.

This year, as we mark IWD, we turn our attention to the upcoming election here in BC and are reminded that elections matter. Who is setting the agenda for our province makes a difference.

This year’s United Nations IWD theme — Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress — speaks to how women and gender diverse leaders are key to legislative and decision making processes.

We need to elect women and gender diverse candidates at all levels of government... but the work doesn’t stop there. We also need to support and empower women and gender diverse leaders to fully participate in all aspects of our political systems. The recent report of the Working Group on Parliamentary Culture at the BC Legislature is one way in which this work is advanced. The group recently published a report with 17 recommendations, supported across all parties represented in the BC Legislative Assembly.

The recommendations and the full report can be found here. They include mandatory training on Canadian and BC Indigenous history, working with local First Nations, gender and diversity, cultural competency, anti-racism and anti-oppression and mental wellness and resiliency. Also included in the

recommendations is a childcare space at the legislature. These are the things that are possible when we come together to break down barriers for women and gender diverse people in our institutions. We are all better off for it.

As a movement, we have much to celebrate as we mark International Women's Day — including an unprecedented number of women leading BC labour unions . But we also know we have a great deal of work to do in empowering the participation of women who reflect the range of Indigeneity, race, disability, gender diversity, economic class and experience of working people. Today we recommit to that work, and to solidarity with women everywhere.