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Week Without Violence

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## **WOMEN CANDIDATES: STILL NOT ENOUGH**

YWCA of Edmonton congratulates Anne McLellan on her re-appointment as Deputy Prime Minister, as well as the seven other Liberal women who either received full portfolios or appointments as ministers of state following the federal election.

Since the launch of the **YWCA Edmonton's initiative One Woman One Vote** in 2001, YWCA Edmonton has been active in assisting women in becoming active participants in shaping the public agenda by encouraging more women to vote, encouraging women's participation in election activities and in seeking public office. With Equal Voice: An Action Group for the Election of Women and other women's organizations across the country, YWCA One Woman One Vote has also been active in tracking the promises made by Prime Minister Paul Martin, in his leadership campaign, to intervene to ensure the nomination of more Liberal women candidates.

While the prime minister boasted that his first cabinet had the greatest number of female ministers ever, he chose this time to drop the number of women in his cabinet from eleven to eight. According to local political scientists and authors Linda Trimble and Jane Arscott, in their book "Still Counting: Women in Politics in Canada", on average women hold only about 20% of the seats in Canadian legislatures – by this measure women are acutely less than halfway to equal political representation given that women account for just over 50% of the Canadian population.

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YWCA Edmonton believes that equity and equality for women require that women's perspectives help shape society's direction. Under-representation results in the public being largely deprived of the positive impact that women could have on the formulation of public policy in decision-making bodies.

YWCA One Woman One Vote asks Prime Minister Paul Martin to rate his performance on fulfilling his leadership campaign promise and asks, "Where are the women candidates you promised?"

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