



September 28, 2010

Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology (INDU)
Michelle Tittley, Clerk of the Committee
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Re: Bill C-393

Dear Committee Members,

We are writing with regard to Bill C-393, *An Act to amend the Patent Act (drugs for international humanitarian purposes) and to make consequential amendment to another Act*, to ask you to recommend the passage of Bill C-393, without any significant changes, by November 1, 2010.

As the country's oldest largest women's multi-service organization, YWCA Canada is a member association of the World YWCA which unites 25 million women and girls worldwide and spans 125 countries, including 28 countries in Africa. The World YWCA, along with over 70 member associations worldwide, works to mobilize effective responses to the challenge of HIV and AIDS for women and girls.

Maternal mortality and child mortality levels in sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere in the developing world are related to the incidence of HIV. The equation is simple. If affordable medicines are available, women and children live. If they are not, they die, leaving families to be led by grandmothers and children. Gender inequality and lack of economic opportunity for women leave them and their children vulnerable to less access to life-saving medicines. Addressing women and girls' needs for HIV treatment and care is vital for curbing the epidemic.

Passing Bill C-393 would support mothers and children. Canada's Access to Medicines Regime (CAMR) has not delivered on its promise to allow generic medicine companies in Canada to produce and export low-cost versions of life-saving brand-name medicines to developing countries. The World Health Organization estimates that between 2004 and 2007, more than 25 million people died because they did not have access to existing medicines and vaccines. The need for amendments to CAMR is clear: in six years, there has only been one export (to Rwanda) of vital drugs.

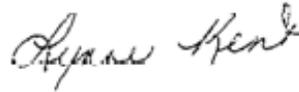
Among other things, Bill C-393 reforms the CAMR to create a streamlined single compulsory license on a patented medicine. A “one-licence solution” would clear the way for generic suppliers and developing countries to navigate the bidding and procuring process without multiple hurdles and uncertainty along the way, making it the rapid solution that has never materialized.

We strongly encourage you to make the legislative changes necessary for CAMR to facilitate the immediate and sustainable flow of lower-cost generic medicines to developing countries.

Sincerely,



Paulette Senior, CEO
YWCA Canada



Lynn Kent, President
YWCA Canada

Paulette Senior, CEO
YWCA Canada | A Turning Point for Women
t. 416-962-8881, ext 241 | f. 416-962-8084
www.ywcacanada.ca

