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# CAEFS

*Press Release*

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## P4W & the Segregated Maximum Security Units for Women in Men's Prisons to Close in Two Years

*For immediate release*

(Ottawa-September 3, 1999) -"The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS) is hopeful that Minister MacAulay's announcement today will mean that we will finally see the closure of the prison that was declared "unfit for bears" by a royal commission in 1938, 61 years ago", stated Kim Pate, Executive Director of CAEFS, in response to the Solicitor General's announcement at the Prison for Women in Kingston.

"We have called for the closure of the prison for Women in Kingston for many years. Most recently, in 1990, the then Solicitor General announced that he planned to follow the recommendations of the Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women to close the Prison for Women and replace it with five new regional prisons and a healing lodge for Aboriginal women. Then, P4W was slated to close in 1994. The closure date has been changed several times since then. We continue to support the closure of P4W and we believe that all women serving a federal prison sentences should be able to access the regional prisons and the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge," continued Pate.

CAEFS also continues to call for the closure of the segregated maximum security units in the men's prisons and the integration into the regional prisons and the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge of the women currently housed in those units. "We are extremely concerned that the decision to close P4W and the segregated maximum security units in the men's prisons will result in the construction of approximately 70 additional prison beds in the regional prisons," asserted Pate. CAEFS is also concerned that the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge will still not be open to all women. "All Aboriginal women prisoners should have access to the Healing Lodge, regardless of the classification they are given by the Correctional Service of Canada. The Lodge was built for the very women who are now kept on the segregated maximum security units in men's prisons," continued Pate.

"Rather than provide further fortification of the regional prisons for women, we expect CSC to focus on the use of more dynamic (human and humane) staff support and intervention to "manage" the women classified as maximum security prisoners as well as those classified as having significant 'mental health concerns'. CAEFS does not support additional construction at the prisons. Instead, we have advocated the application of any new

resources to the improvement and/or the development of community programming and release options for women," concluded Pate.

**For additional information, contact Kim Pate at (613) 238-2422.**