

NS NDP Caucus Bill to Provide Parental Leave to Elected Municipal Councillors

Presentation to Executive Standing
Committee of Halifax Regional
Council, February 26, 2018



Our Caucus



- 7 MLAs
 - 5 women
 - The largest percentage of women in any caucus with official party status in Canadian history
 - The only 3 mothers of young children currently in the Legislature
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Current Situation

- Following the 2016 Nova Scotia municipal elections, women comprise 27 % of municipal councils and 38 % of mayors
- Barriers continue to exist to women's full participation in the decision-making and political life





Current Situation

- Existing Parental Leave provisions and protections (through Employment Insurance system & Labour Standards) are not available for elected officials
 - Municipal councillors currently have to request permission from their council colleagues to take leave
 - Municipal councils have the authority to make provisions for pregnancy, parental and adoption leave, however, there are reasons to set a provincial minimum provision
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POLITICS October 24, 2017 2:10 pm

Updated: October 26, 2017 9:47 am

NDP bill would end N.S. councillors' need to ask permission for pregnancy leave

By Staff The Canadian Press

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WATCH ABOVE: The Nova Scotia political community is reacting to the impact new maternity legislation may have on encouraging more women to run for public office. Alexa MacLean has more.

Canada NS

Parental leave essential to attracting young people to municipal politics, councillors say

Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities plans to discuss maternity leave in the future
By Pam Berman, CBC News Posted: Oct 17, 2017 6:00 AM AT | Last Updated: Oct 17, 2017 6:00 AM AT



Two Kings County councillors are calling for a maternity leave policy to be created for municipal politicians across Nova Scotia. (Andrew Shurtleff/Associated Press)

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Two women in the Annapolis Valley think it's time for a maternity leave policy for municipal politicians across Nova Scotia.

Megan Hodges, a Kings County councillor, said she found out a few days before she was pregnant in 2016 that she was pregnant.

"When I told the mayor, he didn't miss a beat. He just said, 'I look forward to have a breastfeeding councillor in chambers,'" said Hodges.

Leave was up for debate

Hodges said for the most part, everyone has been supportive. But she adds a couple of weeks before she gave birth, there was a council debate about giving her leave.



Pam Berman Reporter

Pam Berman is CBC Nova Scotia's municipal affairs reporter. She's been a journalist for almost 35 years and has covered municipal regional council since 1997. That includes four municipal elections, 19 budgets and countless meetings. Story ideas can be sent to: pam.berman@cbc.ca

Related Stories



Megan Hodges is a Kings County councillor, first elected in 2016. (Megan Hodges/Facebook)

Provincewide policy needed

Now Hodges' colleague on Kings County council, Deputy Mayor Emily Lutz, is pregnant. She's due in March.

Lutz isn't sure how much time she will need to take off, but said the nature of her husband's employment, as a farmer, means he'll have a hard time taking advantage of paternity leave.



Emily Lutz is deputy mayor in Kings County. (Emily Lutz/Facebook)

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Our Bill

- Available to parents for birth and adoption of a child
- Enables members to miss council and committee meetings for up to 52 consecutive weeks without permission or penalty
- Requires a letter to be filed with the Clerk



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