



Resolution 3:

To initiate research and increase awareness of the importance of strong environmental laws

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Conflict of Interest: No known conflict of interest

WHEREAS Research based evidence links the impacts on human health both positively and negatively to our environment

WHEREAS The provincial government's passing of Bill 132, the Better for People, Smarter for Business Act, 2019, will decrease over 80 current environmental bills which has protected our environment

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that RNAO work collaboratively with its partners to initiate environmental research demonstrating the importance of promoting and preserving strong environmental laws that benefit Ontario's populations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that RNAO increase members and stakeholders awareness of the detrimental impacts especially to marginalized populations and outside workers of weakened environmental legislation.

Background

In 1860, Florence Nightingale was the first environmentalist who made the connection between human health and the environment especially advocating for clean water and cleanliness to keep populations healthy. (1)

Bill 132 affects more than 80 pieces of legislation that have safeguarded human health by protecting the environment. Examples of changes include the Aggregate Resources Act, the Pesticide Act, and the Environmental Protection Act. (2)

Weakening of previous laws such as Bill 132 will increase negative health outcomes while eroding clean water, land and air and therefore profoundly impacting marginalized, vulnerable populations such as children, seniors, Indigenous communities and outdoor workers (3).

Outside workers are 2.5 to 3.5 times more likely to get skin cancer than indoor workers due to their increase exposure to UV rays. (4) The WSIB has now included presumptive coverage for

skin cancer cases for firefighters from January 1st, 2017 recognizing that skin cancer is an occupational risk. (5) UV depletion also increases the risk of negative eye effects, possibly immune dysfunction, and more (6)

The EPA notes that Climate change will affect marginalized groups more than others, particularly groups located in vulnerable areas and the poor, young, old, or sick. These populations have a decreased ability to cope due to various constraints either it be financial, physical, environmental, etc. (7)

There are costs associated with pollution. One example is the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) found that contamination costs the Canadian society billions a year in reduced health and well-being. Specifically, \$39 billion a year for Canada or \$4,300 for a family in 2015. Another example is the IISD found that waters of Lake Erie have lost \$4-billion due to phosphorous pollution (8).

The (IISD) notes that there is low quantitative research and is little we know about the pollution cost and effects; they recommend more research. With greater knowledge on pollution costs and effects (this is the critical input needed), and with greater social priority, we will be able to create better practices and processes to combat the negative impacts of pollution (8).

References

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