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For Immediate Release**

Opportunity to Increase the Number of Female Senators

OTTAWA – As Parliament has been prorogued until the New Year and the Prime Minister has publically stated that he will fill the 18 Senate vacancies before the holiday season, Equal Voice is taking this opportunity to ask the Prime Minister to significantly increase the numbers of women in the Senate.

Currently, women occupy 30 out of 105 Senate seats or 28.5% - higher than the 22.4% in the House of Commons, but far short of parity.

Equal Voice is urging the Prime Minister to build upon the momentum of the numbers of women elected in the last election and numbers of women appointed to Cabinet by appointing more women Senators.

Executive Director Françoise Gagnon stated "Equal Voice recognizes that there are complexities in making decisions for who gets appointed, such as linguistic and regional considerations. However, the Prime Minister has an opportunity now to ensure that there are more women at the table." Gagnon continued "The Senate boasts numerous talented women including Equal Voice's Advisory Board member Senator Pat Carney, former Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, Minister of International Trade, and President of the Treasury Board. Now is the opportune time to appoint more women to the Senate."

"With 18 Senate vacancies to fill, now is an excellent opportunity to significantly increase female representation in the Senate" stated National Vice-Chair Donna Dasko. "The last election saw an important increase in the numbers appointed to Cabinet - we ask that the Prime Minister mirror this commitment to increase the numerical representation of women."

Equal Voice is a group of concerned women and men nation-wide, who have formed a multi-partisan non-profit organization devoted to the idea that more women must be elected to every level of government in Canada. Equal Voice supports the participation of women in politics with our online "Getting to the Gate" campaign school, federal election tracking, national programming, regional chapters, and a national youth chapter.

For more information, please visit www.equalvoice.ca.

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