

Dear FCM Board Member,

On behalf of the Council of Canadians writing to encourage your support for the composite resolution you will be considering from London and Toronto calling on the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to urge all municipalities to phase out the sale and purchase of bottled water where appropriate.

The Council of Canadians is Canada's largest advocacy organization and our tens of thousands of members and supporters believe water is a human right and we strongly oppose the bottled water industry's commodification of this public resource.

In an era when the world is dealing with the impacts of climate change, the bottled water industry requires massive amounts of fossil fuels to manufacture and transport. Bottled water also creates excessive amounts of physical waste when Canadian municipalities are dealing with a waste management crisis. Even in municipalities with strong recycling programs, many plastic bottles end up in landfills. Furthermore, the costs and effort required to recycle single use plastic bottles is unnecessary when we consider that Canada's public drinking water system is among the best in the world. As you know, municipal water undergoes far more stringent testing and regulation than bottled water.

We are also concerned about the role of bottled water in exacerbating the global water crisis. It takes three to five litres of water to manufacture a one litre plastic bottle of water. Many Canadian municipalities have faced water shortages in recent years. And yet Canada is a net exporter of bottled water, selling its ancient glacier waters all over the world mostly for the profit of the foreign-owned, big four water companies. Most provinces charge these companies next to nothing to extract this water from springs and aquifers, and whole watersheds are now under threat from this practice.

The demand for bottled water has been carefully fostered by an industry that works hard to undermine our faith in public water.

The Council of Canadians sees municipal bottled water bans as an incentive to improve access to public drinking water in Canadian communities and calls on the federal government to complement these bans with a national water policy that establishes enforceable national drinking water standards, improves funding to municipalities, protects groundwater sources, and bans bulk water exports. In addition, the proposed resolution will make a huge difference in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, eliminating waste from our crowded landfills.

In passing this resolution, the FCM will be playing a vital leadership role in protecting the environment, enhancing safe communities and promoting water as a public resource.

Sincerely,

**Meera Karunanathan**

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