

For Immediate Release

**NAWL Closure a Tremendous Setback for Women's Advocacy:
LEAF urges immediate reinstatement of equality mandate for Status of Women
Canada**

September 19, 2007 - LEAF, the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund, is tremendously saddened that the National Association of Women and the Law (NAWL) has been forced to close its doors. NAWL's closure will leave a detrimental void in legal research and advocacy exposing women's experiences of discrimination.

NAWL has been instrumental in improving legislation for women in the areas of family law, reproductive choice, violence against women, socio-economic rights, and more. NAWL's role has been to ensure that laws and policies reflect and are responsive to the realities of women in Canada.

"There is still a long way to go enshrine equality rights in the law for women in Canada. Women continue to experience violence and discrimination in their work settings, in their personal relationships, and in the public," said Kim Brooks, LEAF Chairperson, "NAWL's expertise is critical for educating government officials, policymakers, and the general public on equality rights."

LEAF representatives will stand in solidarity with NAWL at its press conference scheduled for Thursday, September 20th at 11:00 a.m., Charles Lynch Room (130-S), Centre Block, Parliament Hill. With NAWL, LEAF urges the Harper government reinstate an equality mandate to the Status of Women Canada to help fulfill the promise of equality for women and other marginalized groups enshrined in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

LEAF is the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund, a national non-profit organization founded in 1985. LEAF works to advance the equality of all women and girls in Canada through litigation, law reform and public education using the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

-30-

Contact: Angela Regnier, Director of Communications, 416.595.7170 x. 224