

Motion

Agenda Number: 20.1

Date: September 14, 2023

Moved by Councillor Dasko

Seconded by _____

Whereas violence against women is a Canadian public health crisis that demands urgent action;

And whereas, one in four women experience domestic violence in their lifetime. One woman or girl is killed every other day, on average, somewhere in our country;

And whereas, the most dangerous time for a victim of abuse is when she separates from her partner. According to research from the US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, when there is a history of coercive control, violence and a recent separation, a woman's risk of domestic homicide goes up 900 times;

And whereas, the current Canadian court system is not equipped to protect women. According to the National Judicial Institute, there is no mandatory education for Judges on domestic violence;

And whereas, according to Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children must be protected from "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has care of the child." Our current family justice system often fails our children in this regard;

And whereas, custody disputes are an additional risk factor and each year in Canada about 30 children are killed by a parent. As reported by the Canadian Domestic Homicide Prevention Initiative, recent separation and domestic violence are the two biggest risk factors for domestic violence related child homicides;

And whereas, Keira's Law is named after four-year-old Keira Kagan, who was killed while in the custody of her father, in 2020;

And whereas, Peel Region has formally acknowledged family violence and intimate partner violence as a key focus area of Peel's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan;

And whereas, Peel Region has declared intimate partner violence and gender-based violence an epidemic and have called upon the provincial government to formally declare an intimate partner violence epidemic in Ontario;

Now therefore be it resolved:

1. That Peel Region calls on the federal government to ensure that changes introduced by Bill C-233 to strengthen protection for survivors of domestic violence and raise the level of education on domestic violence and coercive control, for federally appointed Judges, are fully resourced and implemented, and.
2. That a copy of this resolution be sent to Peel-area MPs, MPPs, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, and the Minister of Women and Gender Equality and Youth, for awareness.