

October 4, 2023

Sent via E-Mail: aretha.adams@peelregion.ca

Aretha Adams
Regional Clerk and Director of Administration
Region of Peel
10 Peel Center Drive
Brampton, ON L6T 4B9

**RE: Support for the Embrace Agency to End Violence/Peel Committee Against Women Abuse
Motion to Declare Gender-Based Violence and Intimate Partner Violence an Epidemic in
Caledon**

Dear Ms. Adams,

I am writing to advise that at the Town Council meeting held on September 26, 2023, Council adopted a motion supporting the Embrace Agency to End Violence/Peel Committee Against Women Abuse. The motion declares gender-based violence and intimate partner violence an epidemic in Caledon and requests that the Region of Peel's upcoming awareness campaign regarding gender-based and intimate partner violence include this declaration.

The resolution reads as follows:

Whereas gender-based violence is defined as violence or abuse perpetrated against a woman, girl or gender-diverse individual because of their gender, gender expression, gender identity or perceived gender;

Whereas according to the Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability, in the last 5 years at least one woman or girl was killed every 48 hours in Canada;

Whereas Renfrew County delivered 86 recommendations in a unanimous verdict on the deaths of three local women, who were killed by their former partner on a single morning in 2015;

Whereas these 86 recommendations speak to oversight and accountability, system approaches, collaboration and communication, funding, education and training, measures addressing perpetrators of intimate partner violence (IPV), intervention, and safety;

Whereas the number one recommendation put forward is to have the provincial government formally declare intimate partner violence as an epidemic;

Whereas femicide continues to take place in Peel Region, with the most recent one taking place on July 31st when Argentina Fuentes was killed in Mississauga;

Whereas a femicide took place in Caledon on March 4th, when Cassie Antle was shot and killed in a Caledon home;

Whereas Peel Region has already had 6 femicides connected to the Region in 2023, with 4 of those femicides taking place in July alone;

Whereas there have been 42 femicides in Ontario in the last 41 weeks;

Whereas Canada does not currently include the term femicide in their criminal legislation;

Whereas 75% of women reported abuse and conflict with a partner, spouse or parent as their top reason for their housing loss in Peel Region in 2021;

Whereas Canada continues to experience a crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls;

Whereas Indigenous women are killed at seven times the rate of Non-Indigenous women;

Whereas EREAS technology-facilitated gender-based violence is a growing problem, with 33% of young women between 15 and 24 experiencing unwanted behaviour online;

Whereas all statistics are only scratching the surface and do not include unreported cases; Whereas the demand for support services increases as awareness increases;

Whereas according to the Peel Regional 2021-2022 Snapshot published by the Peel Committee Against Women Abuse, Embrace: Agency to End Violence have seen a 27 percent increase in survivors accessing shelter programs between 2021 to 2022 in Peel Region;

Whereas many of the inquiry's recommendations are either applicable to or could be adapted to the municipal or regional level of government;

Whereas The Region of Peel has formally acknowledged family violence and intimate-partner violence a key area of focus in the Peel Community Safety and Well-Being Plan;

Whereas on Feb 13, 2020, the Region of Peel Council unanimously supported a motion to work with the City of Brampton, City of Mississauga, Town of Caledon, Peel Regional Police and community organizations to develop and strategize a public education and awareness campaign to tackle the issue of domestic violence across the Region;

Whereas the "It's Not Ok" and "Break the Silence" public awareness campaigns launched as of November 2020, annually for the past 3 years during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence;

Whereas 45+ municipalities across Ontario, including the Region of Peel, the City of Mississauga and the City of Brampton have declared intimate partner violence and gender-based violence an epidemic; and

Whereas the Government of Canada and Arif Virani, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada have recognized gender-based violence as an epidemic.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Town of Caledon:

Declare gender-based violence and intimate-partner violence an epidemic in Caledon;

Request that the Region of Peel's upcoming awareness campaign regarding gender-based and intimate partner violence include this declaration;

Take a stand and advocate with the 41 municipalities and regions that have declared gender-based violence and/or intimate partner violence an epidemic to push the Province of Ontario to officially recognize it as such;

Send a communication to Caledon MPs and MPPs, signed by Mayor Annette Groves on behalf of Council, requesting that they join their municipal counterparts in solidarity, asking for an epidemic of gender-based violence and intimate-partner violence to be declared at the Provincial and Federal levels;

Send a communication to the Honourable Arif Virani, Minister of Justice and Attorney General Canada, and the Prime Minister of Canada, signed by Mayor Annette Groves on behalf of Council, advocating that Femicide be added as a term to the Criminal Code of Canada;

Send a communication to Premier Ford and Prime Minister Trudeau, signed by Mayor Annette Groves on behalf of Council, advocating to the provincial and federal governments to provide the appropriate supports necessary to address the epidemic; and

Send a copy of this Resolution to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO).

For more information regarding this matter, please contact the undersigned by e-mail to patrick.trafford@caledon.ca or by phone at 905.584.2272 ext. 4069.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Patrick Trafford
Acting Town Clerk

Cc: Federation of Canadian Municipalities, ceo@fcm.ca
Association of Municipalities of Ontario, amo@amo.on.ca