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REGION OF PEEL

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Nando Iannicca
Regional Chair & CEO, Region of Peel
10 Peel Centre Dr.
Suite A, 5th Floor
Brampton, ON L6T 4B9

nando.iannicca@peelregion.ca

Dear Nando,

My apologies for my delay in getting to you and thank you for your letter dated December 4, 2025, with respect to family and intimate partner violence in the Peel region and the challenges faced by survivors and community service providers.

Gender-based violence is one of the most pervasive, deadly, and deeply rooted human rights violations of our time. It impacts not only those experiencing gender-based violence, but also their families and communities. Every year, the different orders of government in Canada spend billions in costs for healthcare, justice, and social system responses to gender-based violence. It is further estimated that Canadian businesses lose millions of dollars due to loss of productivity and the inability of individuals to work because of gender-based violence. Our Government and I are committed to preventing and addressing this serious problem in our country.

As the Minister for Women and Gender Equality Canada, my team and I are working to end gender-based violence across Canada, most notably through the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence. In November 2022, the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#) was launched by Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Ministers responsible for the Status of Women, representing an historic milestone for Canada. This 10-year National Action Plan is a concrete step toward fulfilling a long-standing commitment of Federal-Provincial-Territorial governments to work together for a Canada free of gender-based violence that supports victims/survivors and their families from coast to coast to coast.

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REFERRAL TO _____
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DIRECTION REQUIRED _____
RECEIPT RECOMMENDED _____

Through an evidence-based and trauma-informed approach, the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence aims to address the root causes and systemic violence that perpetuate gender-based violence. Over \$1.1 billion has been invested in the development and implementation of the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence.

The National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence builds on the foundation laid by *It's Time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence* (federal GBV Strategy). Since its launch in 2017, over \$800 million in new funding, with \$44 million per year ongoing, has been committed under its three pillars: 1) Preventing Gender-Based Violence, 2) Supporting Survivors and their Families, and 3) Promoting Responsive Legal and Justice Systems. More information on the federal GBV Strategy can be found here: [Federal Action on Gender-Based Violence](#).

In addition to this, our team is also working closely with Minister Michel on the new Men and Boys Health Strategy, that includes Men and Boys as partners to tackle GBV. For this we recently announced close to \$2 million in new funding for 18 organizations across Canada that are delivering initiatives to engage men and boys in preventing gender-based violence. This builds on a previous investment of over \$14.3 million by the Government of Canada for these projects.

My team worked closely with Minister of Justice to introduce Bill C-16 (2026) which is a comprehensive criminal law reform aimed at strengthening protections against gender-based violence, improving victims' rights, and addressing delays in the justice system. The legislation introduced measures such as criminalizing coercive control, recognizing femicide in law, enhancing child protection provisions, and reinforcing sentencing tools to better protect vulnerable Canadians.

We worked with provincial and territorial governments to establish bilateral agreements tailored to each jurisdiction's unique priorities, needs and challenges within the parameters of the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence. Each jurisdiction has full independence and responsibility in the selection of funding recipients according to their regional priorities and needs.

Given the provincial jurisdiction over many key services and supports, I encourage you to consider engaging with my counterpart in Ontario, The Honourable Charmaine Williams, Minister responsible for Women's Social and Economic Opportunity for further information on how funding was allocated across the province.

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The Government is making sure no one is left behind while building a more inclusive Canada. This includes available supports for families and survivors of gender-based violence.

I would like to express my gratitude and sincere appreciation to Peel Region and its members for your dedication and honesty in sharing the realities and challenges you face, most importantly in your support of victims, survivors, and their families. Please accept my best wishes.

Thank you for writing on these important issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rechie Valdez', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

The Honourable Rechie Valdez, P.C., M.P.

December 4, 2025

Subject: Urgent Action Required to Address Escalating Family and Intimate Partner Violence in Peel

Peel MPs & MPPs,

On behalf of Peel Regional Council, I'm writing to draw your attention to the growing crisis of family and intimate partner violence in our communities. At its November 13 meeting, Peel Regional Council received a delegation from the Peel Committee Against Women Abuse (PCAWA) regarding the 2025 Peel Family and Intimate Partner Violence Campaign. The delegation reinforced that the statistics contained in the enclosed *2024 Peel Regional Snapshot* reflect the realities of what is occurring in our neighbourhoods, and the growing strain on agencies already struggling with capacity.

The snapshot documents the volume, severity and complexity across all sectors that support intimate partner/gender-based violence survivors. While the numbers are staggering, most incidents are never reported.

- **Children and youth are increasingly exposed to violence:** More than 7,274 children referred to the Children's Aid Society were exposed to intimate partner violence, representing more than one third of all referrals.
- **Survivor needs are growing faster than community capacity:** Chantel's Place recorded 364 acute visits for sexual assault, domestic violence and human trafficking, and delivered 201 sexual assault evidence kits.
- **Service providers are responding at an unprecedented rate:** Over 14,400 survivors accessed support through PCAWA partner agencies, accompanied by more than 26,500 crisis calls and 1,670 referrals for additional services.
- **Violence is increasing in severity:** Police services responded to 16,100 intimate partner violence incidents (almost 2 occurrences every hour), 445 sexual violence incidents and 482 incidents involving strangulation. Peel experienced two femicides in 2024.

These indicators demonstrate a crisis that is intersecting with broader social and economic pressures, including poverty, the unaffordability of housing, homelessness, food insecurity and inequitable access to mental health supports. These conditions also deepen vulnerability and limit survivors' ability to exit violence safely. Community partners consistently report that awareness efforts must be matched by the capacity to respond, house and support survivors.

Nando Iannicca
Regional Chair & CEO

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905-791-7800ext. 4310

We commend the Province for its decision to formally recognize intimate partner violence as endemic in Ontario, and for acknowledging its significant and continuing impact on individuals, families and communities. This recognition is an important and necessary step in naming the scale of the crisis and in laying the groundwork for stronger, coordinated action.

Peel's Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSWB) Plan includes family and intimate partner violence as a core priority, supported by an annual awareness campaign that emphasizes early intervention, coordinated community response and survivor-centred supports. CSWB partners have been clear: sustained investment is required to prevent violence, not only to respond to it.

Community providers need stable and predictable funding for shelters, emergency and transitional housing and community supports to stabilize a system that is operating beyond capacity. While recent provincial investments are welcome, funding continues to lag escalating demand.

We recognize and welcome recent provincial investments to support survivors of gender based and intimate partner violence, including the November 3 announcement of a two-year, \$26.7 million investment to improve accessibility in emergency shelters and strengthen supports that help survivors navigate the family court system. Investments in Peel's emergency and transitional housing system are essential. Peel's coordinated CSWB, Family Violence Action Table and Anti-Human Sex Trafficking initiatives demonstrate that strong partnerships are in place, but without sustained operational and capital investment, service providers cannot meet current or emerging needs. Peel Region urges federal and provincial partners to respond to the needs in Peel. This includes ensuring recently announced provincial investments are used to expand operational and capital funding for shelters, emergency and transitional housing in Peel.

As we look ahead, we are eagerly anticipating the forthcoming report from the Standing Committee on Justice Policy on its study of intimate partner violence and look forward to working jointly with you to implement the changes and investments needed to meaningfully address this crisis.

Thank you for your ongoing leadership and attention to this urgent matter. If you have any questions, or would like further clarification on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me at 905-791-7800 x4310. It would be a pleasure to hear from you.

Kindest personal regards,



Nando Iannicca
Regional Chair and Chief Executive Officer
Region of Peel

Att: *Peel Regional Snapshot, 2024 (Peel Committee Against Women Abuse)*