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YWCA Toronto Responds to Ontario's denial that Intimate Partner Violence Is an Epidemic

On Tuesday evening, the eve of the one-year anniversary of the Renfrew County Inquest, the provincial government responded to the [86 recommendations](#) brought forth by a coroner's jury to address and end intimate partner violence (IPV).

Saddened and disheartened are words that do not come close to describing the heartbreak we felt and are feeling as we read the provincial government's lackluster response, ultimately rejecting the reality we know to be true – intimate partner violence is an epidemic. In fact, the Ontario government rejected recommendation number one to declare intimate partner violence an epidemic – a recommendation that would not cost the government anything. The government also declined the recommendations to establish an IPV commission dedicated to eradicating IPV and creating a survivor advocate role.

[Despite urgency from advocates](#), survivors, the inquest jurors, families of victims of femicide, frontlines workers, and beyond, the province rejected nearly every recommendation, not accepting a single recommendation under the section called "accountability and transparency." Where an outright rejection was not provided, were hollow commitments to continue to consider or to continue what is already being done, with no new substantive action. The provincial government has had a year to consider and begin implementing these recommendations. On Wednesday, the Ontario government was invited to attend a reconvening of inquest parties and 70 violence against women's advocates to assess progress made on the recommendations. They did not attend. The pages of rejections and absence from Wednesday's gathering serve as a stark message that this government rejects the lived experiences of violence of tens, of thousands of women, gender diverse people and children across this province. The implementation of these recommendations offered the government a historical opportunity to respond to this epidemic. By rejecting these recommendations, the government is turning its back on those experiencing intimate partner violence today. It is turning its back on survivors. It is turning its back on the 25 women who have been lost to femicide in the last six months, and their loved ones and it is turning its back on the advocates, frontline workers and communities who work day in and day out to prevent and stop intimate partner violence.

We are incredibly disappointed by the provincial government's inaction to address intimate partner violence by not enacting the recommendations and urge it to reconsider. We urge municipal and federal governments to act and join us in demanding action from the provincial government. Specifically, YWCA Toronto calls on mayor-elect Olivia Chow and the City of Toronto to join the 32 other municipalities across the province that have already declared intimate partner violence an epidemic and declare it here in Toronto. As civic partners, we are ready and willing to support efforts to eradicate gender-based violence in all its forms.

Most importantly, we send our care and solidarity to the survivors, victims and families of them. We will not stop advocating for and alongside you. Our commitment to working towards a world without IPV is unwavering and we will continue to support survivors and their families to escape violence.

MEDIA

Sami Pritchard, Interim Director of Advocacy and Communications
437.286.9627 | spritchard@ywcatoronto.org