

Motion to Declare Intimate Partner Violence Epidemic in the City of Prince George

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia reports concerning, and increasing, figures of gender-based and intimate partner violence; and

WHEREAS the Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime, states men in Canada experience intimate partner violence in significant numbers, yet little attention has been paid to their needs; and

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia reports that 20,000 women in BC experience relationship violence (which includes Intimate Partner Violence) annually.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CITY OF PRINCE GEORGE:

1. Declares intimate-partner violence an epidemic in Prince George to bring attention to this issue; and asks the provincial and federal governments to provide the appropriate supports necessary to address the epidemic; and
2. Encourages other local governments to declare intimate partner violence an epidemic in their community as a way to bring attention to this issue; and
3. Encourages the Province of British Columbia to declare intimate partner violence an epidemic across the province.
4. Encourages the Federal government to introduce femicide as a term within the Criminal Code of Canada as femicide is a result of gender-based, and often intimate partner, violence.

Background:

Intimate Partner Violence is a serious issue and other jurisdictions in Canada are acting. In Ontario, recent (2022) Statistics Canada data (per 100,000 population) shows a rate of Intimate partner violence (IPV) of 257. In the same year rates in British Columbia were significantly higher at 292.

In response to high rates of IPV, 94 municipalities in Ontario have declared IPV an epidemic. In 2024, the Ontario provincial government indicated support for a Private Members Bill to do the same provincially (173 An Act respecting intimate partner violence).

In 2023 the BC provincial government made a commitment to provide a three-year gender-based violence strategy; this is a good step. Local governments may be able to support this work by raising awareness and making their own declaration that IPV is an epidemic in need of action.

Declaring IPV an epidemic costs nothing and has a significant impact. It makes it clear that IPV is a public health crisis and public policy issue. The declaration also serves as validation for anyone who has survived IPV or who is living with IPV now.

The City of Prince George feels it is crucial to use our voice to support work that draws attention to these issues. We encourage our neighbours to consider doing the same.

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Stats Can: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/231121/t001b-eng.htm>

Prov BC: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/domestic-violence/what-is-violence-against-women>