

Council support for Bill C-233 "Keira's Law"

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, and 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; judges need education on what constitutes domestic violence or coercive control and formal education program would ensure another line of defense for victims, as well as preventing violence and abuse before it happens;

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, in worst case scenarios, children are killed by a violent 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, custody disputes are an additional risk factor; each year in Canada, about 30 children are killed by a parent; mothers are responsible about 40 per cent of the time, often due to postpartum depression or mental illness and in the 60 per cent of cases where fathers are the murderers, anger, jealousy or post-separation retaliatory revenge are the usual motivations;

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;

Now therefore be it resolved:

1. That the City of Mississauga Council lends support to Member of Parliament Anju Dhillon's Private Member's Bill C-233, Page 3 of Motion Memorandum that has now been passed to raise the level of education on domestic violence and coercive control, for federally appointed Judges; and
2. That this motion be forwarded to the Prime Minister, the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, and Mississauga Members of Parliament (MP's).

