

Letter of Support to Declare Intimate Partner Violence and Violence Against Women an Epidemic

November 2023

To Mayor and Councillors, City of Guelph,

On behalf of the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW Guelph) this letter is to support the motion to Council by Guelph City Councillor Dominique O'Rourke to recommend that Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and violence against women be declared an epidemic.

IPV represents a deeply concerning issue which affects countless individuals. Its pervasive and devastating impact is felt not only by the victims but also by their families, friends and community.

Declaring IPV an epidemic is a crucial step in acknowledging the urgency of this matter and in activating the necessary resources, awareness and strategies to address it successfully.

CFUW stands firmly behind all initiatives that aim to combat domestic violence, provide support for survivors and implement preventative measures.

Domestic violence has far reaching costs. Survivors often suffer from mental and physical health issues sustained from abuse.

Children who witness or experience abuse are more likely to become victims or perpetrators in their adult life.

Victims may struggle to maintain employment leading to financial instability or the need to relocate due to the abuse.

There often is a social stigma leading to isolation from families, friends and communities. This can make it difficult to look for help and support.

We must continue to stand as advocates and shine a bright light on this issue in our resolve to eliminate domestic violence.

Declaring Intimate Partner Violence an epidemic will be an important step forward in recognizing the severity of the issue and provide the due consideration and attention it warrants.

Yours Sincerely,

Jo Ann Hayter, President, CFUW Guelph

Deb Thompson, Chair, Advocacy Committee, CFUW Guelph