

Template letters to support the implementation of the recommendations from the CKW Inquest

FULL NAME, M.P.P.
ADDRESS
CITY, ON POSTAL CODE

DATE

Dear M.P.P. XXXX:

NAME OF YOUR ORG AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WHAT YOU DO. REFER TO ANY CONNECTION YOU HAVE HAD WITH YOUR M.P.P. IN THE PAST.

I am writing to you today with respect to the recent Culleton, Kuzyk & Warmerdam (CKW) Inquest. As you may know, this inquest was held in June of this year in Pembroke, Ontario, to investigate the circumstances surrounding the deaths of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam, all of whom were killed by the same perpetrator on September 22, 2015.

The inquest jury heard from many experts from across the province and beyond, as well as from witnesses who were involved in the events leading up to and on that day. It also heard from those working in the field of intimate partner violence and from IPV survivors. YOU MAY WANT TO REFER TO SPECIFIC WITNESSES IF YOU THINK THIS WILL INTEREST YOUR M.P.P.

[The jury returned 86 powerful recommendations.](#)

We would like to invite you to join us in calling for the implementation of all 86 recommendations. This would move Ontario in a very positive direction with respect to both responding to and eradicating IPV, including domestic homicide. Our communities would be safer and healthier, public money would be better spent, and women and children would be able to live lives free from the constant threat of violence and abuse.

ANOTHER PARA HERE OUTLINING ANY SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ARE ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT TO YOU OR THAT ARE RELATED TO ISSUES YOU HAVE PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED WITH YOUR M.P.P.

We know you share our commitment to this vision for our province and our community and welcome an opportunity to further discuss implementation of the recommendations with you and your staff.

Sincerely,

NAME
POSITION
ORGANIZATION
EMAIL
PHONE NUMBER

FULL NAME, M.P.
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

DATE

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We know you share our commitment to this vision for our country and our community and welcome an opportunity to further discuss implementation of the recommendations with you and your staff.

Sincerely,

NAME
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ORGANIZATION
EMAIL
PHONE NUMBER

The Honourable Doug Downey
Attorney General for Ontario
Ministry of the Attorney General
McMurtry-Scott Building
11th Floor, 720 Bay St.
Toronto, ON M7A 2S9
attorneygeneral@ontario.ca

Date

Dear Minister Downey,

NAME OF YOUR ORG AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WHAT YOU DO. REFER TO ANY CONNECTION YOU HAVE HAD WITH THE MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL/THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

I am writing to you today with respect to the recent Culleton, Kuzyk and Warmerdam (CKW) Inquest. As I am sure you know, this inquest was held in June of this year in Pembroke, Ontario, to investigate the circumstances surrounding the deaths of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam, all of whom were killed by the same perpetrator on September 22, 2015.

The inquest jury heard from many experts from across the province and beyond, as well as from witnesses who were involved in the events leading up to and on that day. It also heard from those working in the field of intimate partner violence and from intimate partner violence (IPV) survivors.

[The jury returned 86 powerful recommendations](#) which, if implemented, would move Ontario in a very positive direction with respect to both responding to and eradicating IPV, including domestic homicide.

I wish to bring your attention to two of these recommendations:

Recommendation 46: *Study the best approach for permitting disclosure of information about a perpetrator's history of IPV and the potential risk to new and future partners who request such information with a view to developing and implementing legislation. In doing so, study Clare's Law in the United Kingdom and similar legislation in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba, Bill 274 (Intimate Partner Violence Disclosure Act, 2021) and any other relevant legislation and policy. In the interim, develop a draft policy that can address this issue.*

As I am sure you know, *Clare's Law* is named for Clare Wood, a 36-year English woman who was murdered by her former partner. The police knew he was dangerous, but no one informed Clare. England enacted legislation allowing police to provide information about a person's prior intimate partner violence to a current or former partner in hopes of protecting women like Clare in the future. This law has made its way to Canada and has been enacted in three provinces.

In accordance with recommendation 46, we urge you to immediately initiate research on the best way for current and former partners to access information about a person's criminal history in Ontario. In our work with survivors at ORGANIZATION NAME, we frequently see gaps in information sharing within and between systems that unnecessarily leave women and their children in unsafe situations. While we fully appreciate and value the importance of individual privacy, we believe that safety needs to take precedence in some situations; IPV being one of those. As Ontario's Domestic Violence Death Review Committee has noted repeatedly, the vast majority of domestic homicides are both predictable and preventable.

Recommendation 40: *Explore amending the Family Law Act, following meaningful consultation with stakeholders, including survivors and IPV service providers, to provide authority to order counselling for the perpetrator where IPV findings are made by the family court.*

More needs to be done when it comes to preventing IPV. This includes a focus on rehabilitating perpetrators to break the cycle of violence from continuing. Some existing research on counselling programs for perpetrators suggests that participation does result in some positive movement towards behaviour change.¹ Counselling can already be ordered in parenting cases as an incident of a parenting order.² It does not seem that great a leap for the court to have the authority to make a therapeutic order in the context of intimate partner violence, regardless of whether the case involves a parenting issue.

We strongly encourage you to engage in meaningful consultations and research on whether counselling for perpetrators should be added to the legislation. Our organization would be happy to participate in the consultation process.

It is my hope that you would consider supporting implementation of both these recommendations a priority and that, in doing so, you would call on service providers such as ORGANIZATION NAME to share our perspective.

I would be more than happy to discuss this with you further at any time.

Sincerely,

NAME
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¹ E.g. Report from Australia on the Caring Dads Program: Helping fathers value their children (2020), online <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5979881e03596e118c9cadcb/t/5f204494aaf6161c035250b2/1595950231917/2020+Caring+Dads+Final+Report+3-3-2020.pdf>

² E.g. see AM v CH, 2019 ONCA 764.

The Honourable Doug Downey
Attorney General for Ontario
Ministry of the Attorney General
McMurtry-Scott Building
11th Floor, 720 Bay St.
Toronto, ON M7A 2S9
attorneygeneral@ontario.ca

DATE

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I am writing to you today with respect to the recent Culleton, Kuzyk and Warmerdam (CKW) Inquest. As I am sure you know, this inquest was held in June of this year in Pembroke, Ontario, to investigate the circumstances surrounding the deaths of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam, all of whom were killed by the same perpetrator on September 22, 2015.

The inquest jury heard from many experts from across the province and beyond, as well as from witnesses who were involved in the events leading up to and on that day. It also heard from those working in the field of intimate partner violence (IPV) and from IPV survivors.

The jury returned with 86 powerful recommendations which, if implemented, would move Ontario in a very positive direction with respect to both responding to and eradicating IPV, including domestic homicide. To access the recommendations, please click [here](#).

There is one important recommendation that I would like to direct to your office:

Recommendation 54: Enhance court supports for IPV survivors and develop an IPV-focused model for criminal courts similar to the Family Court Support Worker Program. Consideration should be given to the independent legal advice program for survivors of sexual violence as a model for IPV survivors.

As you know, the FCSW program is an important best practice and is widely accepted as a critical service for survivors of violence who are involved in the family law system. Workers receive an intensive training when they are hired, are provided with ongoing support through a private, moderated online discussion forum, have access to a wide variety of resources developed for them and their clients as well as participate in ongoing training opportunities.

FCSWs help the women they serve prepare for meetings with their lawyers, debrief after those meetings, support them in following through on any tasks assigned by the lawyer as well as accompany her to family court to offer support.

While we are aware of the services the Victim/Witness Assistance Program ("VWAP") provides, we believe that more needs to be done to support survivors in the criminal court context. Some of the challenges we've identified with the role of VWAP in supporting survivors is that workers are unable to discuss the details of a case with a woman and the disclosure obligations constrain women from sharing some information because they don't want the abuser to become aware of it. VWAP workers provide necessary information but cannot advocate or support

women in the criminal court context. Further, as employees of the government, they are limited in the systemic advocacy they can do on behalf of their clients

It is my hope that you would consider supporting implementation of this recommendation as a priority and that, in doing so, you would call on service providers such as ours to share our perspective.

I would be more than happy to discuss this with you further at any time.

Sincerely,

NAME
TITLE
ORGANIZATION
EMAIL
PHONE NUMBER

CC

Tyler Jensen, Director of Litigation, Senior Policy and Legal Affairs Advisor -
Tyler.Jensen@ontario.ca

Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services -
MinisterMCCSS@ontario.ca

Sonya Jodoin, Chair (Acting), Office for Victims of Crime & Ontario Victim Services -
Sonya.Jodoin@ontario.ca

Dr. Dirk Huyer
Chief Coroner
Forensic Services and Coroners Complex
25 Morton Shulman Ave., 18th Fl.
Toronto, ON M3M 0B1
occ.inquiries@ontario.ca

DATE

Dear Dr. Huyer,

NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WHAT YOU DO.

I am writing to you today with respect to the recent Culleton, Kuzyk & Warmerdam (CKW) Inquest, with which I know you are very familiar. As you know, the jury heard from many experts from across the province and beyond, as well as from witnesses who were involved in the events leading up to and on that day. It also heard from those working in the field of intimate partner violence (IPV) and from IPV survivors.

Those involved with and those who observed the inquest were deeply moved by the [86 powerful recommendations returned by the jury](#). If implemented, they would move Ontario in a very positive direction with respect to both responding to and eradicating IPV, including domestic homicide.

A few recommendations are directed to your office, two of them being:

Recommendation 74: Ensure that the DVDRC reviews its mandate with a view to enhancing its impact on IPV and provide the DVDRC with improved supports.

Recommendation 77: Consider adopting Femicide as one of the categories for manner of death.

It is my hope that you would consider implementation of both these recommendations to be a high priority. The Domestic Violence Death Review Committee (DVDRC) has a very important role to play in identifying risk factors and systemic changes needed to reduce the rate of domestic homicide. This year is the Committee's 20th anniversary: a good time to review its mandate to ensure it is as effective as it can be and to consider what additional resources are needed to support its work.

Adopting femicide as one of the categories for manner of death would send a powerful message that this manner of death is distinct from homicide more generally. As the jury learned during the CKW inquest, this distinction needs to be understood if response services – whether for victims or perpetrators – are to be effective.

A further recommendation that I believe your office could play an important role in implementing is the final one, which is directed at the parties to the inquest:

Recommendation 86: Reconvene one year following the Verdict to discuss the progress in implementing these recommendations.

One of the biggest challenges facing inquests is that the jury's recommendations are non-binding. This was a concern raised by many in the community prior to the inquest. Committing to bringing the parties back together next June might light the needed fire under those who have the power to implement the recommendations.

We feel strongly that these recommendations need to be implemented and would be more than happy to discuss this with you further at any time.

Sincerely,

NAME
TITLE
ORGANIZATION
EMAIL
PHONE NUMBER

Dr. Kieran Moore
Chief Medical Officer of Health for Ontario
Office of Chief Medical Officer of Health, Public Health
Box 12, Toronto, ON M7A 1N3
kieran.moore@ontario.ca

DATE

Dear Dr. Moore,

NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WHAT YOU DO.

I am writing to you today with respect to the recent Culleton, Kuzyk & Warmerdam (CKW) Inquest. As I am sure you know, this inquest was held in June of this year in Pembroke, Ontario, to investigate the circumstances surrounding the deaths of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam, all of whom were killed by the same perpetrator on September 22, 2015.

The inquest jury heard from many experts from across the province and beyond, as well as from witnesses who were involved in the events leading up to and on that day. It also heard from those working in the field of intimate partner violence (IPV) and from IPV survivors.

[The jury returned 86 powerful recommendations](#) which, if implemented, would move Ontario in a very positive direction with respect to both responding to and eradicating intimate partner violence, including domestic homicide.

Given your leadership role in public health, you are no doubt well aware of the impact of the pandemic on IPV, with rates, including homicide, escalating significantly. Put bluntly, much-needed steps to stem the spread of the virus resulted in increased risk of IPV, which has become known as "the shadow pandemic."

The first of the jury's recommendation calls on the provincial government to "formally declare intimate partner violence as an epidemic."

Implementation of this recommendation would send a clear message to Ontario decision-makers that IPV is a serious social and public health issue. Labelling it as an epidemic would help Ontarians generally understand that IPV is a serious health issue. It would create a new lens through which policy, program and service decisions could be made. Frankly, it might even inspire additional funding for those working on the frontlines to support those affected by IPV.

It is my hope that you would consider making this declaration yourself, in your role as Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health or, if that is beyond your mandate, that you strongly encourage the Premier to make such a declaration.

I would be more than happy to discuss this with you further at any time.

Sincerely,

NAME
TITLE
ORGANIZATION
EMAIL

PHONE NUMBER

The Honourable David Lametti, M.P.
Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
mcu@justice.gc.ca

DATE

Dear Minister Lametti,

NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WHAT YOU DO.

I am writing to you today with respect to the recent Culleton, Kuzyk & Warmerdam (CKW) Inquest. As you may know, this inquest was held in June of this year in Pembroke, Ontario, to investigate the circumstances surrounding the deaths of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam, all of whom were killed by the same perpetrator on September 22, 2015.

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While they are all worthy of discussion and implementation, there are three I would like to draw to your attention at this time:

Recommendation 58: Commission a comprehensive, independent and evidence-based review of the mandatory charging framework employed in Ontario, with a view to assessing its effect on IPV rates and recidivism, with particular attention to any unintended negative consequences.

Recommendation 79: Explore adding the term "Femicide" and its definition to the Criminal Code to be used where appropriate in the context of relevant crimes.

Recommendation 85: Include "coercive control," as defined in the Divorce Act, as a criminal offence on its own or as a type of assault under s. 265 of the Criminal Code.

ORGANIZATION NAME supports the implementation of recommendation 79. Inclusion of the term "femicide" in the *Criminal Code* will advance the seriousness with which this offence is treated, make it easier to collect data for research purposes and help Canadians generally understand the uniqueness of murders of women because they are women.

While recommendation 58 is directed at the province of Ontario, similar mandatory charging frameworks are in place across the country, and ORGANIZATION NAME believes it is time for a national review. While mandatory charging was a helpful initiative at the time it was introduced, a number of significant, if unintended, negative consequences have emerged over the past almost 40 years it has been in use. The result has been that many women – especially those from marginalized communities – hesitate to call the police for help, thus leaving themselves and their children at risk of further harm.

Regarding recommendation 85, we have concerns about the possible impacts this could have on women whose partners are abusive; particularly with respect to their family law cases, in the event they are improperly charged with this offence.

We feel it would be beneficial to establish a justice consultation group consisting of women's equality and violence against women organizations from across the country. Tackling the

important discussions related to both recommendations 58 and 85 would be an excellent starting point for such a group.

I would be happy to discuss these issues with you at any time.

Sincerely,

NAME
TITLE
ORGANIZATION
EMAIL
PHONE NUMBER

The Honourable Marci Ien, M.P.
Minister of Women and Gender Equality Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
marci.ien@parl.gc.ca

DATE

Dear Minister Ien,

NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WHAT YOU DO.

I am writing to you today with respect to the recent Culleton, Kuzyk & Warmerdam (CKW) Inquest. As you may know, this inquest was held in June of this year in Pembroke, Ontario, to investigate the circumstances surrounding the deaths of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam, all of whom were killed by the same perpetrator on September 22, 2015.

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[The jury returned 86 powerful recommendations.](#)

While they are all worthy of discussion and implementation, there is one to which I would like to draw to your attention at this time:

Recommendation 83: Implement the National Action Plan (NAP) on Gender-based Violence (GBV) in a timely manner.

I strongly urge you to take immediate steps to move forward on implementing a NAP. High rates of femicide, and what we have learned from the CKW inquest and the Nova Scotia Mass Casualty Commission inquiry have clearly established that women in this country continue to face high levels of violence and that system responses continue to fail them. A NAP, as proposed in the Roadmap developed by Women's Shelters Canada, would establish a framework and foundation to support the work that needs to be done – now – so that women and children can live lives free from violence and the threat of violence.

I would be happy to discuss these issues with you at any time.

Sincerely,

NAME
TITLE
ORGANIZATION
EMAIL
PHONE NUMBER

Ms. Patricia Kosseim
Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario
Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario
2 Bloor Street East, Suite 1400
Toronto, ON M4W 1A8
info@ipc.on.ca

DATE

Dear Ms. Kosseim,

NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WHAT YOU DO.

I am writing to you today with respect to the recent Culleton, Kuzyk & Warmerdam (CKW) Inquest. As I am sure you know, this inquest was held in June of this year in Pembroke, Ontario, to investigate the circumstances surrounding the deaths of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam, all of whom were killed by the same perpetrator on September 22, 2015.

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[The jury returned 86 powerful recommendations](#) which, if implemented, would move Ontario in a very positive direction with respect to both responding to and eradicating intimate partner violence, including domestic homicide.

One important recommendation is directed to your office:

Recommendation 78: The Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario should, working together with the DVDRRC, justice partners and IPV service providers, develop a plain language tool to empower IPV professionals to make informed decisions about privacy, confidentiality and public safety.

Another recommendation, while not directed specifically to your office, touches on privacy and information sharing issues:

Recommendation 46: Study the best approach for permitting disclosure of information about a perpetrator's history of IPV and the potential risk to new and future partners who request such information with a view to developing and implementing legislation. In doing so, study Clare's Law in the United Kingdom and similar legislation in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba, Bill 274 (Intimate Partner Violence Disclosure Act, 2021) and any other relevant legislation and policy. In the interim, develop a draft policy that can address this issue.

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It is my hope that you would consider supporting implementation of both these recommendations a priority and that, in doing so, you would call on service providers such as ORGANIZATION NAME to share our perspective.

I would be more than happy to discuss this with you further at any time.

Yours very truly,

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