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Hon. Michael de Jong,  
Solicitor General of British Columbia  
232 Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

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**Dear Mr. de Jong:**

I am writing on behalf of Battered Women's Support Services (BWSS) and the many thousands of women we have served and continue to serve across British Columbia.

BWSS was established in 1979 and over the past 31 years, we have daily provided support and advocacy for women who have experienced abuse, while also providing province-wide training and education on violence against women to a host of community-based services.

Together with the broad feminist anti-violence movement and many other organizations, we work for the elimination of all violence against women under a mandate that includes a strong focus on culturally relevant services and systemic advocacy for Aboriginal and Immigrant women. In 2010, we launched The Violence Stops Here Campaign taking our anti-violence message straight to the point violence against women isn't solely a woman's issue, but is clearly and vitally an issue for all men.

I am writing to urge you to immediately convene a public inquiry into the actions of the Vancouver Police Department (VPD), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and the Provincial Crown's office in the cases of the missing and murdered women from Vancouver. This is a case of enormous concern for the family and friends of the murdered and missing women, the residents of the Downtown Eastside and all British Columbians.

The families have long urged the government to establish a public inquiry and this grows only more essential given the disturbing details that have emerged since the Crown announced its decision to stay the remaining 20 charges against Robert Pickton and the lifting of the publication ban associated with his trial. I commend the VPD for publicly acknowledging the mistakes that were made in this case and for calling, along with the RCMP, for a public inquiry.

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The family, friends and advocates of the missing women must get an answer on why it took police and the Crown so many years to respond to complaints and to solve this case. More broadly, the women in our province must see their government as one that takes the issue of violence against women with the profound seriousness it deserves. Finally all British Columbians deserve information about why we lack a co-ordinated regional police force that could more effectively investigate these cross-district cases. Through our work we have identified significant short-comings in the working relationships between the VPD and the RCMP that have hindered investigations in Metro Vancouver region.

A public inquiry is also essential to address the ongoing criminal justice needs of marginalized populations in British Columbia, particularly Aboriginal persons, mentally-ill and drug-using persons, and women involved in the sex trade. The historical context, the problem of stigma (including systemic and attitudinal sexism and racism), isolation together with insufficient support for anti-violence services continues to expose marginalized people to profound levels of violence and inadequate police protection. A public inquiry will identify existing gaps and problems in police and Crown practice, and offer concrete recommendations for improvement. As important, it will help to redress historic issues and help to ensure that vulnerable populations are receiving the police protection and social supports they deserve.

Finally, I call on you to urge the City of Vancouver to make public the existing findings and recommendations of the Vancouver Police Department's internal investigation of the Missing Women case.

Sincerely,  
Battered Women's Support Services



Angela Marie MacDougall  
Executive Director

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Cc: Premier Gordon Campbell Email: [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca)  
Mayor Gregor Robertson, City of Vancouver Email: Mayor Gregor Robertson