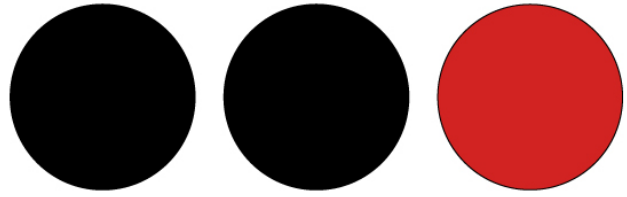




**BATTERED WOMEN'S
SUPPORT SERVICES**



Safety Changes Everything

August 28th, 2022

Presiding Judge

Provincial Court of Saskatchewan
220 19 St E
Saskatoon, SK
S7K 0A2

Dear Madam or Sir,

Re: Circle of Support and Legal Defense for Dawn Walker

I am writing to request that Ms. Dawn Walker be released from the custody of the Saskatchewan provincial corrections and instead that her case be diverted and subject to restorative/transformativ justice measures.

Considering her history as an Indigenous woman and mother who is a survivor of gender-based violence and trauma, I believe it is appropriate and within your discretionary power to ensure Ms. Walker is not subjected to any further punitive and unnecessary measures. As a woman dealing with the impacts of trauma, the appropriate course of action for Ms. Walker would ensure assistance to facilitate her to heal and address any concerns regarding her son. Her extended community and network of friends and family has informed me that they will ensure Ms. Walker receives the circle of support she so desperately needs.

Ms. Walker has the support of not only BWSS Battered Women's Support Services and me as executive director, but of a widening network of advocates, leaders, Indigenous people, organizations, and members of the public. As an organization that works to end gender-based violence, BWSS works with women who like, Ms. Walker have experienced failures in police response to complaints of domestic violence and trauma; the failure of the provincial child protection system and the family law legal systems to keep her and her son safe. From our vast experience, we consider Ms. Walker's "disappearance" was not of her own volition, rather acting in a context of a choice of no choices fleeing while leaving behind a successful career and life to protect herself and her son.

In the words of U.S. Judge Beckerman who recently ruled on Dawn's transfer back to Canada:

"Ms. Walker, most people in our courtroom arrive here after experiencing some trauma in their lives and that's especially true for the women who end up in our courtroom. And I'm sorry that you weren't

able to get the support that you needed at home and that you ended up here in an Oregon courtroom,” Beckerman said. “I hope that you are able to see your son again soon.”

Now is the time for the Saskatchewan court, under your leadership, to provide the support and understanding that Ms. Walker needs.

So far Ms. Walker has received enormous support from a growing number of organizations that serve women and families impacted by MMIWG2+, as well as survivors of domestic violence and the family law system. Such organizations that publicly stand with Dawn include:

- Idle No More
- Iskwêwuk E-wichiwitochuk (Women Walking Together)
- Native Woman’s Association of Canada
- No More Silence
- Family Law Court Hurts
- Women Who Choose Life
- Regina Treaty Status Indian Services
- Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto

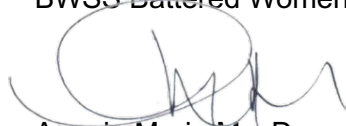
In addition, Ms. Walker has received letters of support concerning her case from political and Indigenous leaders, including former Senator Lillian Dyck, Senator David Arnott, Chief Bobby Cameron of the FSIN, Vice Chief Heather Bear of the FSIN and Vice Chief David Pratt of the FSIN.

As a provincial judge, you are no doubt aware of the extremely high rates of incarceration of Indigenous women in Saskatchewan and nationally, as well as the fact that Saskatchewan’s rate of intimate partner violence exceeds the national average while domestic homicide of women soars. Restorative action is necessary to begin to address these startling statistics and to begin to write a new chapter for our province, this is not the time to punish a victim of interpersonal and systemic violence for taking action to save her life.

I urge you to take a courageous step towards restorative change that can lead not only to a new beginning for Ms. Walker and her son, but that will truly contribute to shaping a path of judicial transformation toward building a systemic response that truly helps keep all women and children safe.

Thank you for your consideration. If you or your staff require additional information, I can be reached at by phone at 604-808-0507 or by email at director@bwss.org.

Yours sincerely,
BWSS Battered Women’s Support Services Association



Angela Marie MacDougall
Executive Director