



ANTI-VIOLENCE ORGANIZATION DISAPPOINTED AT LACK OF BC BUDGET ACTION ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Wednesday March 1, 2023 - (x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), S^kw^xwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətał (Tseil Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C) – A BC-based anti-violence organization providing frontline advocacy and support services to assist survivors of gender-based violence, Battered Women’s Support Services, is reacting to the BC Budget 2023 announcement.

According to **Angela Marie MacDougall**, Executive Director of Battered Women’s Support Services: “We join many others in celebrating some crucial wins for women, gender diverse people, children, and working families: free universal prescription contraception, the expansion of school food programs, the renter’s mean-tested tax credit, funding for healthcare including mental health supports, and increases in shelter rates for those accessing social assistance and disability. However, it is incredibly disappointing and discouraging that gender-based violence is not mentioned even once in the budget. For a budget that claims to integrate a GBA+ analysis, this is an obvious and unacceptable omission.”

“Across Canada, there has been an alarming [19 percent increase](#) in reported sexual assaults. But the BC Budget makes no mention of this crisis, and zero funding is allocated to anti-violence services. Anti-violence services already face growing wait lists, with survivors waiting years to access safety measures and crisis support counseling. Anti-violence services and transition houses are an essential healthcare service, an essential safety service, an essential justice service, and an essential housing service. But they have been completely ignored in the latest budget,” states **Rosa Elena Arteaga, BWSS’s Director of Clinical Practice.**

Says Summer Rain, Manager of Indigenous Women’s Programs at BWSS, “In the last year alone, Indigenous women and girls including Tatyanna Harrison, Noelle O’Soup, Carmelita Abraham, and Chelsea Poorman have all been murdered or died under suspicious circumstances in B.C. In Prince George, the RCMP has failed to properly investigate abuse and harassment of Indigenous girls. Yet, shamefully, the BC Budget makes zero mention of Indigenous women’s or girls’ safety, and there are no justice measures for missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two spirit people in the budget. Instead, the budget allocates millions of additional dollars to the failed institution of the RCMP.”