

## NDP Response: Women's Shelters Canada

Dear Ms. Lisa Martin,

Thank you for the letter and outlining the priorities on behalf of Women's Shelters Canada. Women have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, from bearing the brunt of an unprecedented wave of job losses while shouldering huge burdens of unpaid care. On top of this, New Democrats are greatly concerned about the shadow pandemic of intimate partner violence and violence against women that has increased over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are grateful for the efforts that WSC undertook to deliver a roadmap for a national action plan to end violence of women to the federal government earlier this year.

This work has been delayed for far too long in the era of Me Too and Times Up. New Democrats are all too aware of the number of reports and studies that have come out over the past six years arriving the same conclusion: Canada needs to replace the patchwork of services and supports with a federal plan to meaningfully tackle gender-based violence.

The pandemic has made it clear that women in risky, vulnerable circumstances can no longer wait for action.

If elected, a NDP government will immediately begin to implement the National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence. We will update the Canada Labour Code to include ten days of paid leave for people dealing with family and domestic violence.

A NDP government will also properly fund shelter services and programs that help women and those experience gender-based violence have access to temporary safe housing and services. We will apply a Gender-Based Analysis+ lens to our National Housing Strategy to ensure that people fleeing from domestic violence can afford to safely leave shelter services because they have access to transitional housing.

New Democrats will support the first three steps of the roadmap by establishing transparency and independent oversight when developing a national action plan. We will build on the work we initiated earlier this year when we proposed legislation to add coercive and controlling behaviour to the Criminal Code.

A NDP government will move forward on the recommendations from the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. We will work in partnership with Indigenous women and gender justice organization to develop a comprehensive, culturally appropriate plan to ensure full gender equality for First Nations status as a matter of priority, consistent with Canadian and international court rulings.

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A NDP government will work with all levels of government, experts, grassroots advocates, and gender justice organizations like Women's Shelters Canada to build on the critical work that is being done. Together, we will carry out vital work to end violence against women and all forms of gender-based violence.

We must and *will* do better.

New Democrats believe that our families, our communities and our country are stronger when women thrive. Gender equity is a fundamental value for New Democrats, and we are committed to building a Canada where no one is left behind.

Thank you,

The NDP Team