

From:

Canadian Center for Women's Empowerment (CCFWE)

Ottawa, ON

info@ccfwe.org

August 6, 2025

Femicide in Ottawa and Beyond: A Call for Coordinated Policy and Systemic Change

In the first half of 2025, four women were killed in Ottawa in acts identified by police as femicides. This already surpasses the total number recorded in the city for all of 2024.

These killings are not isolated tragedies. They reflect a broader national crisis of system and policy failures that continue to grow while political leaders fail to act with the urgency it requires.

As the nation's capital, Ottawa should be where real progress begins, not where the consequences of inaction are most visible. Instead, it stands as a devastating example of what happens when governments fail to act boldly and proactively.

The Canadian Centre for Women's Empowerment (CCFWE), alongside the individuals and organizations endorsing this letter, calls on all levels of government — federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal — to respond with urgency and in collaboration.

Preventing femicide and gender-based violence requires more than policing; it demands real investments in the conditions that allow people to live and leave safely. This includes access to economic independence, deeply affordable and safe housing, livable incomes, and survivor-led supports. Without these foundations, survivors remain trapped in cycles of abuse, unable to leave violent partners because they cannot afford to.

In a time of national affordability and housing crises, survivors are being pushed further into danger. Without structural change, safety remains out of reach.

As the new federal government sets its economic agenda, it must center those most at risk. Economic recovery means nothing if women remain unsafe. Real economic recovery must include protections and supports for those impacted by domestic violence and coercive control. Affordability without safety is not justice.

This means the government must increase and sustain funding for its commitments to the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence and the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality.

We call on political leaders across jurisdictions to prioritize:

- Secure sustainable funding to protect and empower women's economic security so that women can afford to leave abuse
- Affordable, rapid access to safe housing that meets the needs of those at risk
- Uphold the Calls for Justice from the MMIWG2S National Inquiry

- Community-based, non-carceral responses to all forms of gender-based violence, including economic abuse and femicide

This letter is an endorsement of CCFWE's policy brief, *Femicide in Ottawa and Beyond: A Call for Coordinated Policy and Systemic Change*, which includes clear, actionable recommendations for each level of government. We urge decision-makers to act swiftly and meaningfully on these calls.

Justice cannot wait. Safety is not optional.

Sincerely,

Meseret Haileyesus

Executive Director, Canadian Center for Women's Empowerment (CCFWE)

Mesi.haileyesus@ccfwe.org

Denna Berg

Director of Policy, Canadian Center for Women's Empowerment (CCFWE)

denna.berg@ccfwe.org

Endorsed by: