



Ontario Association of Interval & Transition Houses

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Media Release

Violence survivors funding proposal rejected by federal women's agency

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A project designed to bring survivors of woman abuse to decision-making tables across Ontario has been rejected by Status of Women Canada, according to the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses, which sought the funding.

"We're shocked that this proposal was denied," said Erin Lee-Todd, Chair of OAITH's Social Justice and Action Committee. "The funding would have directly supported women violence survivors in local communities to become involved in work to address partner abuse in their local systems and services."

The proposed support work with survivors was developed based on previous work funded by the Province of Ontario and the Canadian Women's Foundation. The Association submitted its application five months ago and received the denial letter dated April 8th. No specific reasons were given for denying the submission other than unnamed "assessment factors," volume of requests and lack of money.

"We thought our application had a good chance because SWC criteria stress direct impact at the local level and we've been funded many times over a period of 20 years when advocacy was eligible for support," said Eileen Morrow, OAITH Coordinator. "We were really surprised that no one even discussed the proposal with us, something that had always taken place before the cuts to Status."

Shelter association representatives are troubled by news that more feminist women's groups funded in the past are now being rejected by the Status of Women Canada. The Association supports the call by national women's groups for an investigation into this disturbing trend by the federal government agency. In solidarity and as a member of the Ad Hoc Coalition on Women's Equality and Human Rights, OAITH echoes the comments and questioning by national women's group regarding the decision-making process of SWC.

Since the December 6th National Day of Action on Violence Against Women was created in response to the Montreal Massacre, almost 500 women and children in Ontario have been murdered in situations where intimate partners were either charged or committed suicide.

"The killing continues," said Morrow. "Many survivors now want a direct voice in work to end violence against women. Feminist women's groups want to support their call for meaningful inclusion but need the federal women's funding agency to acknowledge the importance of this work. We hope questions about funding for feminist groups will lead to more support in this area."

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