

TO:

Thursday, October 2, 2025

Provincial: Ministry of the Attorney General – Doug Downey & MCCSS – Michael Parsa

Federal: Minister of Justice – Sean Fraser & Minister of Sport – Adam van Koeverden

National: Hockey Canada – Media Dept & NHL – Bill Daly

Hello: Our names are Jessie Rodger and Jennifer Dunn. We are the Executive Directors of Anova: A Future Without Violence and the London Abused Women Centre in London, Ontario, respectively. Our organizations serve survivors of Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence through shelter, counselling, support and advocacy.

We are writing to you today because of the recent court decision on July 24, 2025, and the surrounding testimony in the Hockey Canada sexual assault case. The judgement delivered on July 24th, as well as the subsequent narrative around survivors and sexual violence, has exposed the deep cracks in both the Provincial and Federal legal systems and in sport institutions when it comes to responding to sexual violence.

Survivors and advocates across the country know that myths, stereotypes, and outdated understandings of trauma and violence continue to influence decision making at every level and across sectors from judges to sports organizations. This cannot continue.

We are calling on leaders across Canada to take urgent action. Survivors of sexual violence deserve real justice that is rooted in evidence, compassion, and accountability. Canadians deserve institutions that act with transparency and integrity.

To begin moving toward this vision, we call for the following actions:

1. Transparency from Hockey Canada – Release the Report

We call on Hockey Canada to release the final report from the investigation into the sexual assault allegations in June 2018. We also call on the Federal Minister of Sport to make the release of this report a condition of any future federal funding to Hockey Canada.

2. Access to Expertise in Court

We call on the Ministry of the Attorney General to review the impact of the Ontario Court of Appeals opinion (August 2024 re: R. v. Hoggard) surrounding the use of expert witnesses on trauma in sexual assault cases. Survivors must not be disadvantaged in court because myths and stereotypes remain unchecked.

3. Provincial Judicial Education

We call on the Ontario Attorney General to strengthen judicial education with a comprehensive trauma and violence curriculum. The current practice of “grandparenting” judges into these programs must end and all provincially appointed judges must participate in up-to-date education programs.

4. Federal Judicial Education (Bill C-233-Keira’s Law)

We call on the federal Minister of Justice to review the recent amendments to the Judges Act in accordance with Bill C-233 (Keira’s Law). This review must involve consultation with Canadian experts in trauma and sexual violence to ensure that federally appointed judges receive evidence-based, comprehensive, and mandatory education.

5. Legislative Change with Testimony Limits

We call on the Attorney General to review and consult with experts on how the court system could better operate using a transparent trauma and violence informed approach, with particular sensitivity to cross-examination in gender-based violence and Violence Against Women cases.

6. Accountability for the National Hockey League

We call on the National Hockey League (NHL) to immediately craft and implement a comprehensive policy addressing sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and gender-based violence. This policy must be developed in collaboration with experts across North America. The NHL remains the only professional sports league without such a policy this failure must be addressed now.

Creating a more just legal system matters to everyone. Gender-based violence and Violence Against Women organizations across the country are ready to support provincial, federal, and national partners in ensuring and supporting that this work is done.

Survivors cannot wait. Communities cannot wait. Canadians are watching and demanding meaningful change. We urge you to act with urgency, transparency, and accountability.

We are eagerly awaiting your response to our calls to action.

Thank you,

Jennifer Dunn, Executive Director, London Abused Women Centre jen@lawc.on.ca

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