



November 14, 2018

To:

Members of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women
fewo@parl.gc.ca

From:

Hélène Langevin
Maison Simonne Monet-Chartrand
Chambly (Montérégie), QC

Subject: Pressing needs in women's shelters

To the members of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women:

We understand that the committee is conducting a study on the system of shelters and transition houses serving women and children affected by violence against women and intimate partner violence, and that it will examine:

- the current gap between the number of beds required and the number of beds provided in shelters and transition houses;
- existing federal programs and funding for shelters and transition houses; and
- possible solutions to the gap between the number of beds required and the number provided.

I am writing on behalf of Maison Simonne Monet-Chartrand. We are a women's shelter with 12 licensed beds located in Chambly in the Montérégie. We cater mainly to battered women and their children and women in difficulty. Last year we helped more than 100 women and as many children. Unfortunately, we had to refuse 76 requests for assistance because of a shortage of space available at the time.

In our opinion, shelters do not receive fair funding from one province or territory to the next. Our grants are at the same level they were 10 years ago. The work we do is crucial: the lives of women and children are literally at stake. We offer more than mere shelter from violence even though that is an extremely important part of what we do. As you know, one woman is killed by her partner or ex-partner every six days in Canada. In addition to ensuring the safety of women and children, we also offer external services for women from the perspective of intersectionality, as well as to seniors, women with reduced mobility and immigrants. We continue to develop our service offerings to adapt them to the needs of these women and children, and we must invest an unbelievable amount of time in creating miracles because these

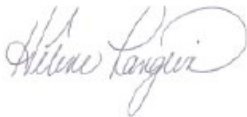
services are not taken into account in our overall mission funding. While we are looking for money to maintain services, we are not helping our clientele.

We make the following recommendations:

- Since violence against women still exists in epidemic proportions, shelters and transition houses for abused women and their children must be recognized as an essential service.
- Shelters and transition houses are currently severely underfunded. We recommend a significant and sustainable increase in the basic funding. This should allow for an increase in the number of beds and shelters available, but it should also include staffing and service delivery. Building a shelter without staffing it with the necessary personnel is useless.
- We support the Hébergement femmes Canada call for a national action plan. The Government of Canada should develop a national action plan based on United Nations recommendations. Like the National Housing Strategy, the action plan should be a joint federal, provincial and territorial effort. In 2018, every woman should have access to comparable services regardless of where in Canada she lives.
- We also support the brief sent you by the FMHF requesting a significant increase in overall mission funding for our organizations, which have lost 20% of their funding over the past 15 years because the funding for operating expenses is not indexed.
- Lastly, we support the FMHF's recommendations.

We would like to invite you to visit our shelter if you are ever in our region and/or to contact us by phone if you have any questions or would like more information about the work we do.

Sincerely,



Hélène Langevin, Director General
Maison Simonne Monet-Chartrand
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Cc: Jean-François Roberge, Minister of Education and Higher Education of Quebec and member for Chambly
Matthew Dubé, NDP, member of the House of Commons and member for Chambly—
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