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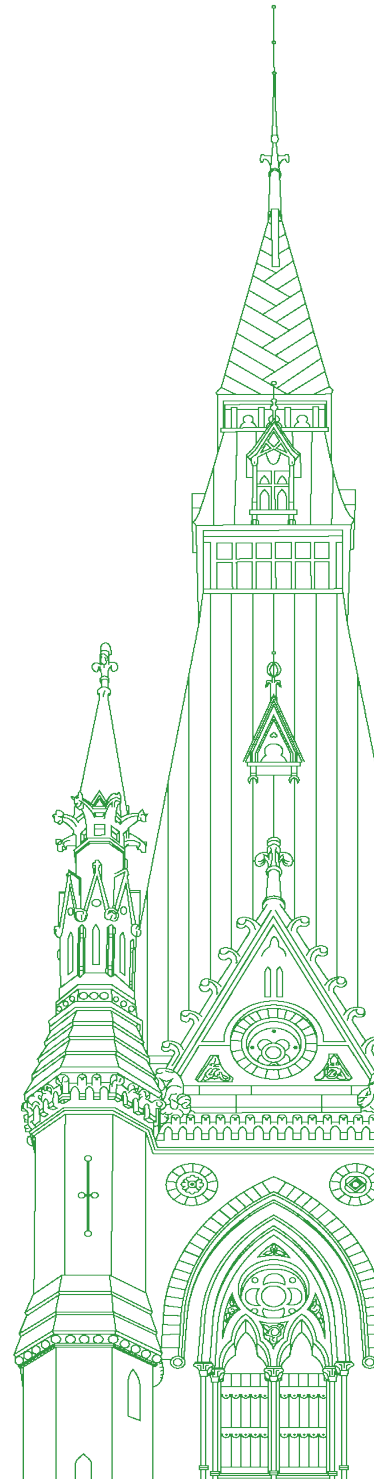
Standing Committee on the Status of Women

EVIDENCE

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Wednesday, September 23, 2026

Chair: Dominique Vien



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• (1630)

[Translation]

The Chair (Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC)): I call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 47 of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women.

The committee will resume its study of women's shelters and transitional housing.

As usual, members are attending in person in the room and remotely using the Zoom application.

Here are a few quick instructions. Please wait until I recognize you by name before speaking. For those participating by video conference, click on the microphone icon to activate your mike. Please mute yourself when you are not speaking. If you are in the room and wish to speak, please raise your hand. For members on Zoom, please use the “raise hand” function.

For those on Zoom, you can select the appropriate channel for interpretation at the bottom of your screen: floor, English or French. For those in the room, you can use the earpiece and select the desired channel.

I would like to remind the witnesses that committee members may ask questions in either French or English. If they need interpretation, I would ask them to take a moment now to select their channel and adjust their earpiece. That way, when they are asked questions or need to speak, they won't have to mess with their device. Time flies in this committee.

Before we welcome our witnesses, I'd like to provide this trigger warning. We will be discussing sensitive topics that you may find distressing. If so, I encourage you to let us know through our esteemed clerk, and we can help you at that time. Indeed, the things we hear in this committee aren't always much fun.

I also have a question before I introduce our guests. Ms. Mary Hannaburg has distributed documents, some of which are in English only. They haven't been translated. In addition, not all the documents have undergone a language check. Can I still distribute them to you? The clerk will still make sure, as usual, to have the documents translated and revised. We will then email them to you. If that's okay with everyone, we'll do it that way.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: I also want to inform you that our colleague Ms. Larouche is currently busy in the House, so we agreed—I think

it's the will of everyone—to give her the opportunity to take the floor a little later in the meeting.

I would now like to welcome all the witnesses.

First, we have Sandy Torres, researcher at the Observatoire québécois des inégalités. Next, from St. Felix Centre, we have Brian Harris, executive director. Finally, from Kanesatake Health Center, we have Mary Hannaburg, mental health support and trauma specialist.

Ms. Hannaburg, you have the floor for five minutes.

[English]

Mary Hannaburg (Mental Health Support and Trauma Specialist, The Kanesatake Health Center Inc.): Good afternoon.

[Witness spoke in Mohawk]

[Translation]

Here's what I said.

[English]

I'm presenting myself. My name is Mary Hannaburg. I'm from the Kanesatake community, and I work in mental health and addictions for the Kanesatake Health Center.

I'm employed at the Kanesatake Health Center. This is my 30th year. I started working as a community health representative for a year and a half, and then the position of mental health support worker opened up and I took it. I've been doing that, and also intervention, crisis intervention, and mental health and wellness presentations and support for women who are in crisis. Part of this work is dealing with women who are victims of domestic violence and are experiencing family violence, as well as men with mental health issues and addictions, and homelessness. This is what I've been involved in.

Here are our community demographics. They're made up of the total number of people who are registered with the Mohawks of Kanesatake, which is 3,268. This is in the province of Quebec. We are in a federal territory, but it is the Mohawks who reside there.

We have a band council system at the administration level that is a bit neutral, because there is an imbalance that has to be rectified. Hopefully, it will be done soon. We have an administration right now. With all due respect, I will not talk about that difficulty, because it's at the political level.

What I would like to say is that we are living in a vacuum right now. There are not a lot of projects going ahead.

We have a crisis on our hands, because we have a need for housing. We have a need for shelters. We have a need for transitional homes. Also, our community is mixed. There are status and non-status people because of the Indian Act and the discrimination in the Indian Act, which is still ongoing to the present day. It has not stopped.

There is a bill in the House of Commons that had its second reading and has gone to the INAN committee. It's stalled there because the committee prorogued for the summer, and now it's coming back to it. This is now an obstacle for us, because women and their children who cannot have their status do not have access to services.

On one of the sheets I am distributing to you, there's a communiqué from Indigenous Services Canada, which has also been translated into French, that says you need the 10-digit number. If you need to see a psychologist and you don't have your band number, you cannot be seen. You cannot get services for certain things. You can come in for medical services, because the provincial doctors will treat you, but you cannot have access to all of the other services. It's sad to say, but this is going on today.

The people affected in that category right now total 1,194. They and their families cannot access services. That is 63.54% of people who are blocked. This is gender inequality. We talk about determinants of health, and Health Canada has signed on to that, but basically it has not.

I want to say there are many things that.... There's the distance from culturally appropriate shelters. I've given you a map of all the locations in Quebec, and they are far away. A lot of the time, victims of violence and domestic violence do not want to leave their communities, because they already have to leave their homes, and then they have to leave their families and their children have to leave their friends.

We have violence. There are some stats. They are inaccurate, because not all cases are reported. We don't have a big trust level with the Sûreté du Québec and the provincial government because of the youth protection and the removal of children from their homes, so people do not do this reporting.

We have children with special needs. Sometimes, when they go to a shelter outside the community, they cannot accommodate them, whether it be because of their ADHD or autism, or just the fact that places are limited.

• (1635)

We need trained staff, policing and security. We have no police—

[Translation]

The Chair: I'm very sorry to have to cut you off, Ms. Hannaburg.

[English]

Mary Hannaburg: —and no first line.

Thank you.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you for your speech. I have to be fairly strict on the time, since we have a number of witnesses to hear from.

Ms. Torres, you have the floor for five minutes.

Sandy Torres (Researcher, Observatoire québécois des inégalités): Thank you very much.

My name is Sandy Torres, and I am a sociological researcher at the Observatoire québécois des inégalités.

Before we begin, honourable members, Madam Clerk, on behalf of the entire team, I really want to thank you for this invitation to appear.

I would like to provide a bit of context for what I have to say.

The Observatoire québécois des inégalités is a non-profit organization based in Montreal, Quebec. Our team consists of a dozen people, and our mission is to produce and spread knowledge on various forms of inequality in Quebec to raise awareness among a wide audience and inform decision-making.

Today, I would particularly like to draw your attention to two points from a recent study conducted with my colleague Geoffroy Boucher, who is an economist. The project was carried out in partnership with six public health authorities in the province, as well as the Société d'habitation du Québec. Those partners wanted to shed light on the range of costs associated with the lack of sustainable housing action during a housing crisis.

The first point is the following: The lack of affordable and high-quality housing is associated with domestic violence, the victims of which are mainly women, as we know. For starters, financial difficulties put people at greater risk of experiencing domestic violence, although no socio-economic category is spared. Housing unaffordability adds on to that financial stress, which can create tensions. That means there's the issue of the cost being too high, but there's also the issue of a simple lack of housing, which can lead families to live in rundown housing or to cohabit in spaces that are too small.

In fact, overcrowding is a source of various health problems. It can lead to mental health disorders, sleep disruptions and tensions, which are all circumstances that are likely to lead to violent acts.

Based on this finding, our statistical analyses demonstrate that living in housing that is too small is associated with an added risk of experiencing domestic violence. We even estimated that the risk was 7.8% higher compared with people living in suitably sized housing.

The issue of housing is part of the solution for reducing intimate partner violence. That's the first point I would like to emphasize.

The second point that our work highlights is how important it is for women seeking to leave an abusive relationship to have access to a variety of accommodation and affordable housing options. Lack of access is a major barrier to leaving an abusive relationship, especially for low-income people.

I would like to share another statistic with you. Our analyses show that people who consider themselves to be very poor are 59% more likely to have thought about leaving home due to violence, but to have not done so. The data do not reveal why those individuals didn't leave, but it's fair to assume that a lack of financial means plays a significant role in the decision not to go.

For women leaving abusive relationships, the lack of affordable, high-quality housing is going to put them further at risk. Some will live in poor-quality or even unsafe housing. Others will experience housing instability to the point of hidden or visible homelessness. Experiences of domestic violence are a proven cause of homelessness among women.

In conclusion, I would like to briefly point out that housing policies are one of the key levers for improving living conditions across a number of areas at once. That said, it's still important to remember that domestic violence consists of a relationship where one individual has domination over another, which is overwhelmingly to the detriment of women. That means it's necessary to tackle the root causes, upstream, and address the persistent inequalities between women and men, for example by reducing income and wealth gaps, to ensure that every woman has financial independence.

• (1640)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Torres. Those will be your closing remarks for this first speech.

Good afternoon, Mr. Harris. You have the floor for five minutes.

[English]

Brian Harris (Executive Director, St. Felix Centre): Hello. I'm executive director at the St. Felix Centre in Toronto, Ontario.

Members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to participate in this meeting and to share the experience of St. Felix Centre in discussing the system that supports women and girls experiencing homelessness in Canada. I'm grateful to the committee and to the federal Liberal government of Canada for allocating time and resources to gathering more information about this extremely important subject.

Women in Canada face unique challenges when it comes to homelessness. Women are more likely to be subjected to physical and sexual assault. Much more frequently, they also bear the responsibility of caring for their children at the same time. The unfortunate reality is also that the number of women in need is likely far higher than our system data tells us. Due to systemic failures, women are less likely to report abuses and seek support. Women are also disproportionately in situations where they have to choose between their physical safety, and the safety of their children, or homelessness. The ongoing toxic drug crisis exacerbates all these other challenges and creates additional barriers to their connecting with services.

Our heritage as an organization is women-focused. The Felician Sisters created what would become the St. Felix Centre over 85 years ago. It was originally started to address the needs of women in the late stages of the Great Depression. While our service delivery scope has expanded over time, addressing the unique needs of women has remained at the forefront of our organization's mission.

We operate shelters, as well as a transitional housing program, in addition to permanent supportive housing. While we would specifically advocate for most of the focus and investment to be made in permanent housing, it is also true that there should be more dedicated space for women and girls in shelters and transitional housing. Our shelters are coed. We have certainly seen how this can create concerns around safety and accessibility for women. Our transitional housing program, on the other hand, is women only. It allows for a different kind of focus in our service delivery.

While I understand that the focus of this committee is on shelters and transitional housing, I want to share that St. Felix Centre was also fortunate to be able to participate in the successful federal Liberal housing program, previously referred to as the rapid housing initiative, which was introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. We brought land into the development project, but the federal government provided key capital dollars to make a housing project possible. In partnership with the municipality and the provincial government, we were able to build 31 units of rent-geared-to-income supportive housing for women and women with children. The availability of capital funds and the urgency designed into the RHI program allowed us to go from demolition of the existing building to welcoming our first tenants in just 24 months.

With Build Canada Homes, there's an opportunity to expand upon the success achieved by the federal government in creating additional housing for women. We're hopeful that our experience and demonstrated success in delivering housing quickly can encourage this government to continue to make meaningful investments in all types of housing options. We would like to see the federal government also work with the provincial government to ensure that as units are delivered through Build Canada Homes, the equally important resources are provided for the supportive programming. Rent-geared-to-income housing with supports is the best way to move marginalized women out of homelessness and to help ensure that they have the resources they need to stay housed.

The problems facing our communities are complex. The scale at which various supportive services are needed across the spectrum is definitely significant. Shelters and transitional housing can and do play an important role. However, we've seen first-hand that when resources in the form of capital funding are provided and barriers such as restrictive zoning are removed, permanent housing projects—projects that are the true solution to homelessness—can be delivered quickly and efficiently.

Thank you again for inviting St. Felix Centre to attend this meeting and join in this discussion.

• (1645)

[Translation]

The Chair: You're very disciplined, Mr. Harris. Thank you very much.

It's now time to speak with the members. We'll start with the Conservatives.

Mrs. DeRidder, you have the floor for six minutes.

[English]

Kelly DeRidder (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

This is an incredibly important conversation that we're having today, and I look forward to contributing with some questions in the second round here.

However, I'd like to use my time today to put on notice two motions, both relating to the policies that have an impact on the safety, rights and opportunities of women and girls. I want to be very clear that these motions are about examining the policies themselves and the impacts, and about ensuring that the experiences of women and girls are a part of the discussion and the evidence obtained here in this committee.

The first motion deals with biological males in women's sports.

Women and girls have fought for generations for equal opportunity in sport. For many female athletes, participation in competitive sport involves years of training, huge financial investment, and personal sacrifice. It's so much more than just showing up to compete. It's team selection, awards, advancements, athletic funding, scholarships and opportunities to pursue sports at a higher level.

I believe this committee has a unique opportunity to hear from those affected and to examine what these Canadian policies mean for women and girls. This includes competitive fairness, physical safety, and the potential emotional and psychological impact on athletes who believe their opportunities are being affected. There needs to be a balance among inclusion, safety, competitive fairness and equal opportunity.

With that, I will read the first motion into the record.

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Standing Committee on the Status of Women undertake a study on the impact of policies governing the participation of biological male athletes in women's and girls' sport, with particular consideration to:

(a) the fairness and competitive integrity of women's and girls' sporting categories;

(b) the impact on women and girls who have dedicated years of training and financial resources to competitive sport, including their opportunities for advancement, awards, team selection, athletic funding and scholarships;

(c) the potential physical, emotional and psychological impacts on women and girls who perceive that their opportunities for competition, recognition or advancement may be affected by the participation of [biological male] athletes in female sporting categories;

(d) the experiences of women and girls who have raised concerns regarding competitive fairness, privacy, safety or access to female-only sporting spaces;

(e) the impact of current policies on the participation, retention and long-term development of women and girls in sport;

(f) the perspectives of female athletes, coaches, parents, sport organizations, medical and mental-health professionals, researchers and transgender athletes; and

(g) international and Canadian approaches to balancing inclusion, safety, competitive fairness and equal opportunity in sport;

and that the committee report its findings and recommendations to the House.

The second motion I have today concerns biological males in federal women's institutions.

Women who are incarcerated are already in vulnerable positions, and the decision of who can be housed in a women's institution can have a major consequence for their safety, security and privacy. I'm sure we've all seen the headlines in the news recently. We're asking the committee to investigate if these institutions consider the offenders' previous convictions and offence history and the nature of the circumstances surrounding the approval. The committee needs to also examine incidents involving violence, sexual assault, harassment, threats or other safety concerns, as well as the experiences and concerns of women who are incarcerated in institutions where biological males are present.

I think it is important that we have a real understanding of how our current policies are being applied and that women who are directly affected and impacted have an opportunity to have their experiences heard in this committee.

With that, I will read the second motion into the record.

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Standing Committee on the Status of Women undertake a study on the safety, security, privacy and rights of women incarcerated in federal correctional institutions, with particular consideration to Correctional Service Canada's policies and practices concerning the placement and transfer of offenders who identify as women in women's institutions; that the study examine:

• (1650)

(a) the criteria and decision-making process used by Correctional Service Canada when determining whether an offender is placed or transferred to a women's institution;

(b) the health, safety, security and privacy considerations applied in making such decisions;

(c) whether an offender's previous convictions, offence history and the nature of circumstances that those offences are reviewed and considered before approving a placement or transfer to a women's institution;

(d) the number of requests for placement or transfer to women's institutions, the number approved, denied or withdrawn, and the number of offenders subsequently transferred out of women's institutions;

(e) incidents involving violence, sexual assault, harassment, threats or other safety concerns involving transgender offenders housed in women's institutions;

(f) the experiences and concerns of women incarcerated in institutions where transgender offenders are housed, including their access to appropriate complaint, reporting and grievance mechanisms;

(g) the government's interpretation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Canadian Human Rights Act as they relate to the rights, safety, privacy and security of incarcerated women—

• (1655)

[Translation]

The Chair: I have to interrupt you, Mrs. DeRidder, since the six minutes are already up.

We're going to move over to the Liberals now.

Ms. Ménard, you have the floor for six minutes.

Marie-Gabrielle Ménard (Hochelaga—Rosemont-Est, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Welcome, Mr. Harris, Ms. Torres and Ms. Hannaburg. I'm sorry: Our colleagues claim that this issue is important to them, but they're using their time to talk about other things. Thank you very much for being here today. Shelters and transition homes are an important matter. In Quebec, we call them MH1s and MH2s. We're almost done with gathering testimony.

I'll start with you, Mr. Harris.

You mentioned certain barriers to speeding up the construction of shelters and transition homes. With the creation of Build Canada Homes, the federal agency that's invested in this area—let us see if you think these are the right approaches—do you think this is one of the avenues worth exploring, from a government perspective, to speed up the construction of shelters, particularly for women?

[English]

Brian Harris: Yes, having additional dedicated spaces for women who are currently experiencing homelessness to be able to access would be an incredibly important way to allocate resources from Build Canada Homes while not losing sight of the fact that we want the priority to be on permanent housing and permanent options.

There are thousands and thousands of unhoused women in the city of Toronto right now. I'm sure that if they had the choice and could pick between a coed space and a space that was dedicated for women, they would choose a space dedicated for women.

Yes, I believe that would be an important investment.

[Translation]

Marie-Gabrielle Ménard: There isn't anything that currently exists under this name, but let us dream bigger: There are shelters and transition homes—MH1s and MH2s—but if we imagined an MH3 solution, what would do the most to support women who, with great courage, decide to flee domestic violence, so that they can envision a more stable future?

With your expertise, how can you enrich the committee's study? What should be considered?

[English]

Brian Harris: I would advocate for the model that we completed in partnership with the federal government last year, in July 2025, through the former rapid housing initiative, which fast-tracked the construction of units specifically for women and women with children. That came with rent-geared-to-income supplements, as well as supportive services. This allows us to have a building that is dedicated to women and staffed 24 hours a day, where they can have stability. It's their permanent space, it's safe and it's where they can really focus on their recovery and rebuilding their lives after they've been fleeing all of these horrible circumstances that they've been exposed to.

Replicating that type of program as frequently as we possibly can would be my recommendation.

[Translation]

Marie-Gabrielle Ménard: Thank you.

You touched on this, Ms. Hannaburg, but from a cultural sensitivity standpoint, what must be taken into account when developing resources on the territory you represent?

[English]

Mary Hannaburg: Yes, absolutely. This can happen. There is a model that was given, and it comes from the city of Plattsburgh, where they have incorporated a full, holistic approach. They put religion in there, but we could take that out and put the cultural aspect in it. We could have trained personnel from the community.

People from our community can stay within the community, but we do not have security at the present time. We are living in a no man's land. Anything goes, there. There have been murders there. We are living without any police. We have no security. We're in a gap right now.

We have to be very careful, but at the same time, we need these resources. People are reluctant to go outside the community, because sometimes they say, "We can take only two children. Do you have three? We're sorry, but you have to leave one with a relative." No, the mother will not. These are the choices that we have to make.

On being culturally relevant, we have traditional people who work with the medicines, who understand the families and who understand the dynamics of multi-generational traumas, such as the removal, the DYP or the invasion in Kanesatake in 1990. Whatever was going on, these are things that have come on and have passed on to the generations.

We also need help for the men to heal, along with the families, all together. Not only do we need the focus on the women and their safety, but we need help for whole families with that holistic approach. That's what we need.

• (1700)

[Translation]

Marie-Gabrielle Ménard: Do I have any time left, Madam Chair?

The Chair: You have 43 seconds left.

Marie-Gabrielle Ménard: That may not be enough, but let us get started.

Ms. Hannaburg, you mentioned the lack of choice that women sometimes face. If they decide to flee domestic violence, that means leaving their community, so we understand that there are women who choose to remain in a violent situation.

[English]

Mary Hannaburg: Some of them will not talk about it, because they think youth protection is going to come in and remove their children. It happens. We've seen it in the past. The question is where they will go. They have to go to Akwesasne, which is quite far, or to a shelter in Montreal when they come from a rural area, abstracting their children from their circle, their school and everything. It disrupts their whole....

It's really difficult to make that choice.

[Translation]

The Chair: Those will be your closing remarks, Ms. Hannaburg. The role of chair is a very thankless one. I have to cut off some very good discussions.

Ms. Larouche, you're back. We're very pleased to have you here with us. Things are moving quickly for you.

You have the floor for six minutes.

Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I'd like to thank my colleague from Mirabel, Jean-Denis Garon, for kindly being here while I was giving a speech in the House.

I'd also like to thank the witnesses for being here. I have read a bit about the work they do. It's a bit unusual. In all transparency, I admit that I didn't hear all of their opening remarks, but I had still done some research beforehand.

Thank you very much, Ms. Hannaburg, for being here with us.

I'm going to start my questions with Ms. Torres.

Thank you for all the work you're doing while this study is ongoing, which explains the study's importance. I'm very happy to be able to return to the topic of today's meeting, because it's a particularly hot topic right now.

Some figures came out in July, between when Parliament recessed and when it resumed. The figures showed that there had been an increase in homelessness, particularly among senior women, who simply can't make ends meet anymore. We could come back to the specific issue of senior women, but this study also talks a lot about shelter capacity. However, as we know, a shelter is not permanent housing, by definition.

Does part of the intake capacity problem stem from the fact that women who would be ready to leave a shelter have no other affordable housing to go to?

If you also have anything specific to say about the situation of senior women, I would leave you to speak to those issues.

Sandy Torres: Indeed, there are women who do not leave an abusive relationship, for all sorts of reasons. However, one of those reasons is definitely the lack of affordable housing options that suit their financial capabilities. That's undoubtedly one of the reasons why women remain trapped in an abusive relationship.

In Quebec, there was a count of people experiencing visible homelessness. There are recent figures from 2025-26, but there are also figures from 2022 that are a bit more detailed. There aren't any detailed, more recent figures yet. The more detailed figures from the 2022 count tell us that conflict with a spouse is one of the main causes of housing loss among women. It pushes some women into homelessness.

I don't really have more specific data when it comes to senior women, other than the fact that the studies that have been conducted on homelessness show that the faces of homelessness are becoming much more diverse. There are now more women, more seniors—men and women—and more families as well.

These studies also show that even though more housing is being built and there is more rental housing available—that's still a fact—this housing is still unaffordable and financially inaccessible to people with low incomes. Vacancy rates, which represent the proportion of housing available to rent, are still very low for the cheapest rents. That means a lot is being built, and supply is increasing, but the barrier of unaffordability persists. As a result, women are being trapped in violent situations, and those who decide to leave their homes don't have a decent option for housing.

● (1705)

Andréanne Larouche: I'm going to ask you about that.

You raised the issue of a head count and the trouble getting figures, particularly on women experiencing homelessness. I recently took part in a round table with people who receive services from SOS Dépannage back home in Granby. I was invited to speak with people who come looking for services. Many women explained that, when they finally decided to leave their homes, they were facing homelessness or needed to seek food assistance.

It's very difficult for those reasons. Some women may also try a form of hidden homelessness by staying with friends, for example. Some may even try to find housing in exchange for services. Older women have even indicated that sometimes, in order to have a bed and a place to stay, they had to agree to certain conditions, let's say.

How can the fact that a head count is difficult influence our analysis of real housing needs?

At the same round table, people also told me that the housing units that were being built—there are a lot of them being built in our area—did not meet their financial needs.

Can you answer me in less than 30 seconds?

Sandy Torres: The figures we have certainly represent only the tip of the iceberg. It is already very concerning, and it is only a small part of the problem.

The Chair: That was your last word, madam. Thank you.

We will now begin a second round of questions.

Mrs. Roberts, the floor is yours for five minutes.

[English]

Anna Roberts (King—Vaughan, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to all the witnesses. The work you are doing is very much needed and very much appreciated.

I'll address my first question to Ms. Hannaburg.

You spoke about housing. We hear this continuously. I hear it in my riding. I hear it when I speak to survivors of intimate partner violence and survivors of human trafficking. I'm a little confused, so maybe you could help me out here.

This Liberal government promised to build 500,000 homes. They pledged to build them. According to CMHC, the new estimate shows that we need to increase that. It doesn't appear to be happening. The new estimate shows that Canada housing starts need to rise between 417,000 and 469,000 per year to restore affordability to pre-2020 levels by 2036. Instead, housing starts under this government are projected to fall from over 250,000 to as low as 212,000 by 2028. This comes as our population growth is expected to recover across most major cities, increasing demand for housing and the need to build more.

The report shows that high construction costs and difficult financing conditions are making it harder to build new homes. Weak condominium sales continue to discourage new developers from building condominiums. Housing construction has fallen sharply in major cities, such as Toronto, Vancouver, Ottawa and Montreal. Compared with last year, the housing supply gap has grown larger in Montreal and Ottawa. It remains the same in Vancouver. This is a report from CMHC.

I heard you speak about women trying to flee, but they're afraid to do so, because there isn't ample shelter or there isn't ample housing. It's affordability, finance and a whole gamut of situations. How can we turn that around quicker? I understand that this government talks about building more homes, but that's not happening. What suggestion do you have to speed up this process?

• (1710)

Mary Hannaburg: What I can say is that, basically, we don't see much development in our area. There is a need to bring the services and shelters closer to our community. We're in a rural community. We're in a small community. The thing is that we are one of the communities that have a high incidence of violence. Indigenous women are the population being targeted. If you read the national inquiry report on the missing and murdered, they state that. We're experiencing it at a crisis level. That needs to be addressed.

We need to have these services. We need them yesterday, but they're dragging their feet. You'll see them sending money outside the country. Maybe that's all necessary too, but start here with the first nations and the indigenous population.

Anna Roberts: I don't mean to cut you off, but I do agree with you. Do you know what? When you have a healthy home, the way I was raised by my grandparents, you have to get out there and help someone else. When your home is not healthy, we have to take care of the people we have. I agree with you totally.

My other question is for Monsieur....

Hold on. I can't remember his name. Is it Harris?

A voice: Yes.

Anna Roberts: Oh, good. That was a senior moment.

Voices: Oh, oh!

Anna Roberts: You explained that you have had the co-operation of this government to build the homes. Can you explain to us how that happens in your area and yet we're ignoring Ms. Hannaburg's area?

Brian Harris: I can't speak to the particulars of how funds are allocated across municipalities. I know that through the last program we were involved with, different municipalities received different funding allocations. I'm not aware or familiar with the specifics of how those allocations are made.

Anna Roberts: May I ask what riding you're in or what area you cover?

Brian Harris: We're in Spadina—Fort York, in Toronto, Ontario.

Anna Roberts: You're in Toronto. You just answered my question.

I have a last question for you, Ms. Hannaburg. We have an area that's been getting support, yet they're ignoring you. I want to thank you for what you do, because it's difficult. I have interviewed and spoken to numerous survivors across this country. I have also spoken to individuals—

[Translation]

The Chair: Mrs. Roberts, I have to interrupt you.

[English]

Anna Roberts: I'm so sorry.

[Translation]

The Chair: You're not as sorry as I am.

Ms. Lambropoulos, you have the floor for five minutes.

Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

[English]

Thank you to all of our witnesses who are here on this very important topic today.

My first question is for Ms. Hannaburg.

You referenced the Indian Act and how this is stopping many of the women in your community from being able to access the care they need during episodes of violence. I'm wondering if there is a specific amendment to the Indian Act that you would recommend and that would allow us to move past that or to solve this problem.

Mary Hannaburg: Yes, there is, absolutely. Thank you for asking that.

Yes, there is Bill S-2. That is going to be going through its third reading. Our minister, Mandy Gull-Masty, has been dragging her feet on that, I'm sorry to say, and she's misinterpreting what everyone is saying. All the nations across Canada, pretty much, are saying that Bill S-2 needs to be passed immediately.

It's enough.... We've been consulted for over 50 years now. It's enough. We need to have our equality. We need to remove those obstacles so our children and our grandchildren can be treated equally and have access to all the services, whether that be seeking a psychologist, going to a shelter, having financial assistance or education—everything. They are blocked from that. If you do not have your status number, you do not have that.

We are the only race for whom this government dictates who we are as a people. This has to stop. This is genocide, what they're doing to us, and I don't want to get harsh on that, but this is the blockage. We talked about removal of barriers. That is a big one, and that will help women. They can inherit their families' homes. They can have a home; they can build a home, or they can buy a home on the territory. They will be able to live on the territory with their families. They'll be able to be buried in the cemetery with their kin. This is what's happening to us in our communities.

We need to have security in our communities. We have no policing. We are living in a no man's land.

• (1715)

Emmanuella Lambropoulos: I'm sorry, but I do have another question. Regarding what you've just mentioned, you spoke about having no police and no security. It is a reserve, I would imagine.

Mary Hannaburg: Yes, this is federal territory. It's the territory.

Emmanuella Lambropoulos: If the indigenous community does have the right to self-determination, what role can the federal government play without interfering in that self-determination?

Mary Hannaburg: The Canadian Charter of Rights guarantees us the right to live in our communities in safety, just like anyone else, just like any other Canadian here in this room or anywhere. We do not have that luxury. We do not. We have gunshots going off at three o'clock in the morning and automatic weapons when we're sleeping—when our children and my grandchildren are sleeping there. This is what's going on.

It's a self-will run riot community right now, because there is no policing. There are no implemented security checks and balances. The provincial government and the federal government are aware of that. They've been called on that. They've been told. There are no regulations there. We have high-speed traffic running through the territory at all hours of the night. You're lucky if you don't get hit going to the store. We don't let our children on the roads, because there are no sidewalks there. They're riding their bicycles. We have to be very careful.

There are things going on that I will not mention here, but I'm just saying that there is a need for security. The charter guarantees our right to equality. Implement it and pass Bill S-2 with the Senate amendments right now, and stop dragging it. That will remove the obstacles.

Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Thank you very much.

Mary Hannaburg: Thank you very much. I get very impassioned.

Emmanuella Lambropoulos: As you should....

[Translation]

Ms. Torres, my third question is for you.

You talked about housing options for low-income women fleeing violence, as well as for their children. I'd like you to tell me more about that.

Can you tell me what kinds of options we could help put in place?

Sandy Torres: Actually, I rely mainly on briefs from civil society organizations, scientific literature reviews and other qualitative and quantitative studies I've read that make recommendations.

I know that you pay particular attention to housing resources, and we need those. We need a whole continuum of housing that meets different needs—

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Torres. I don't want to seem like I'm picking on you, but it's time to move on.

Ms. Larouche, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

Andréanne Larouche: Thank you, Mr. Harris, as well, for your contribution to this committee's study. I forgot to mention you earlier.

Ms. Torres, I'm going to ask you a question as briefly as possible so that you have time to answer.

I want us to talk about numbers now. There is another piece of news that caught my attention this summer: It has been shown that when it comes to homelessness, prevention costs less, as it does in many areas, by the way. When a woman stays longer in a shelter because she can't find housing, she takes up space that can't be offered to another woman.

Can you give us an idea of the cost of a shelter bed, per day or per month, compared to the cost of supporting that same person in social or community housing?

Sandy Torres: I would love to be able to give you those numbers, but I don't have them. That gives me an idea for future projects. However, we know that prevention is needed. Why is it not being done? It's hard to say. These are investments that we must agree to make for the future. We all benefit from building social housing, for example. None has been built for decades, and we are now suffering the consequences.

Andréanne Larouche: I'd like to quickly follow up on that.

Recently, the Fédération des maisons d'hébergement pour femmes estimated the funding needed for 89 additional emergency shelter spaces at \$5,679,582. That works out to about \$63,816 per bed per year, \$5,318 per bed per month or \$175 per bed per day. We may not be able to quantify the savings that could be achieved through prevention, but we have an idea of the federation's budget requests.

Lastly, wouldn't it cost the government less to work upstream?

• (1720)

Sandy Torres: It would cost the government less, but term lengths are what they are, and it takes a while to reap the benefits of these social investments, which certainly pay off.

Andréanne Larouche: Thank you, Ms. Torres, Mr. Harris and Ms. Hannaburg, for your contributions to this study.

The Chair: Thank you, madam.

Mrs. Borrelli, the floor is yours for five minutes.

[English]

Kathy Borrelli (Windsor—Tecumseh—Lakeshore, CPC): Thank you so much, Chair.

As a registered nurse, I provided health care and helped fix the physical wounds of children and their mothers who had been subject to violence, but the work our witnesses do is just amazing. I don't know if I could do it. You are very brave, and we very much appreciate the work you do.

Mary Hannaburg, you mentioned earlier in your testimony that there are unmentionables that you wouldn't bring up here. I can't help but think that we really need to hear all of the horror in order for the government to take notice and take action to solve these problems. Are you willing to share any further?

Mary Hannaburg: I can tell you that we are not proud of coming from a community where they find dead bodies thrown into septic tanks. We've had people dumped there. This is very traumatizing to the community.

We were proud, after 1990, to have our nation be who we are, as Mohawk people. This is starting to disintegrate. Our pride is going down the toilet right now because a young man was found killed. He had been murdered. This is something that we live with. We're not proud.

That poor person who was killed, and his family.... He was a very young man. He'd just turned 25 years old. It's being dealt with by the police, but it has happened. We need security. We need police. We need policing, and we need it yesterday and last year. We need it. This is enough of living like this.

I'm telling you that you get awakened by people shooting automatic weapons in the pitch black, and I'm not the only one who talks about this. On our social media, they talk about it, but nothing is getting done. Why is it being left? "Just let everybody get killed. It's one less Indian. A dead Indian is a good Indian." Is that the way it goes? We value our lives. We value our children's lives. My grandchildren sleep in the house where those gunshots are coming in the middle of the night.

We're not living in a war zone, but we're left on our own. It's like our lives do not have value. We want to live in a safe community—

Kathy Borrelli: Thanks.

Mary Hannaburg: We want our children to be able to go to school on the bus and not have the bus get run off the road. It's time for the government to do something or implement some type of security that works to keep our community safe.

We have outside people who are running businesses there. They've infiltrated our community. It's no longer the loving Kanasake with the beautiful pine trees. Devastation is going on there.

Do not close your eyes. We need support, and we need help there.

I have to be careful how I speak. That's all. I have to go home and sleep in my bed tonight.

Kathy Borrelli: Mary, do you have transitional housing for women who have suffered from violence?

Mary Hannaburg: In the community, in the present day, no, we do not.

Kathy Borrelli: Are there people in your community who would help make that happen, should you have the funding you need?

Mary Hannaburg: Right now, we're at a standstill. There is no leadership there. We're at a standstill.

Eventually, we will have an elected band council, because we're in court right now. That's how dysfunctional we are. Let's leave it at that. With all due respect, we're at a political standstill, and there is no leadership. We have just administrators right now.

• (1725)

Kathy Borrelli: Thank you, Mary.

I have a question for Mr. Harris. When women leave transitional housing—I guess they have to at a certain point—what keeps them from being successful in the outside world?

Could you answer quickly? I have another question.

Brian Harris: I'll do my best.

Our transitional housing program offers a 12- to 24-month stay for women who are exiting the shelter system. I think the main barrier they face when leaving the transitional program is affordable options to move into permanent housing, because there is such a lack. Also, our program is a recovery program, and right now there are not a lot of treatment options available in Ontario.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Harris.

Thank you, Mrs. Borrelli.

Ms. Nguyen, you have the floor for five minutes.

Chi Nguyen (Spadina—Harbourfront, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses, Ms. Torres, Mr. Harris and Ms. Hannaburg, for being here today.

[English]

Mary, thank you for sharing. I know those are really tough conditions to be living under. We recognize that there is work to be done, so thank you for sharing with us.

Mr. Harris, I want to speak a bit more about the great and excellent work at the St. Felix Centre, which is located in downtown Toronto. The site that you talked about, Hope House, is actually just north of my riding, in beautiful downtown Toronto.

I want to ask you a bit about the conditions and what worked well in that particular program—

[Translation]

Andréanne Larouche: Madam Chair, there is no interpretation.

[English]

Chi Nguyen: —in terms of the wraparound supports.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Nguyen, I'm going to ask you to pause for a moment, please, because there's no interpretation.

Andréanne Larouche: There wasn't any, but I don't know if there is now.

The Chair: Ms. Nguyen, could you speak so we can check to see if the interpretation is working?

[English]

Chi Nguyen: I can repeat the question. It was about what was working well in the rapid housing initiative—

[Translation]

The Chair: Bear with us for a moment, colleagues. There's no interpretation.

[English]

Chi Nguyen: Tell me what we're getting right when we do that well.

[Translation]

Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton—Bkejwanong, Lib.): Maybe she could turn off her camera.

The Chair: I will suspend the meeting for a few seconds.

• (1725)

(Pause)

• (1725)

The Chair: We seem to be having trouble hearing you, Ms. Nguyen, so I'll give the floor to another colleague.

Ms. Nathan, the floor is yours.

[English]

Juanita Nathan (Pickering—Brooklin, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Through you, I'll ask this question of Sandy Torres. I want to ask about your research and some of the intersectionalities. The newcomer women....

The region I am from is Durham. It's east of Toronto. It's a GTA riding. We have a lot of South Asian communities and other communities moving in, and they often face language and cultural barriers when disclosing violence or accessing shelters.

Can you speak to this? In your research, how is housing insecurity compounded for immigrant and racialized women, specifically?

• (1730)

[Translation]

Sandy Torres: Yes, some women are more exposed than others. In addition to being a woman, when you are a racialized woman, an immigrant woman or a woman living with a disability, you are more exposed to financial difficulties, discrimination in housing and trouble finding decent, adequate housing.

As for domestic violence, what I've seen is that there's a lack of data—I'm speaking for Quebec—because it's still an under-reported and underassessed problem. Therefore, it's hard to get a clear picture of what's going on. From what I read, immigrant women may also tend to under-report their situation even more than other women. That is an untested assumption, but it means that, in the statistics, the problem can be less apparent than it should be, because we know that these women are more affected. Qualitative research and interviews with immigrant women and stakeholders from community organizations demonstrate this.

[English]

Juanita Nathan: Thank you.

Your research further identifies indigenous women and women with disabilities as a particularly vulnerable group when adequate housing is unavailable. What should governments consider when designing housing responses for these particular populations, for women with disabilities?

[Translation]

Sandy Torres: In my introduction, I set the stage a bit by saying what the Observatoire québécois des inégalités does. We definitely want to identify solutions, but we're not experts in solutions. We're going to do more tracking and bring together partners who have more specific expertise to suggest options.

What I can emphasize is the importance of a housing policy that coordinates short-term actions, but also provides a longer-term vision to meet the diverse needs of populations based on the constraints and difficulties they may experience. We need to take a longer-term view while solving the current problems. In Quebec, in any case, this overall vision is still sorely lacking. In Canada as well, in my opinion, it must be renewed and adapted to the problems we're seeing.

[English]

Juanita Nathan: Thank you.

This question is for Mr. Harris. What have you learned from operating both shelter services and long-term housing that could help government prevent homelessness rather than simply respond to it? I also want to add on to that to see how federal housing investments can best complement what municipalities and frontline organizations are already doing.

What I'm trying to get at is this. I know that federal governments don't directly give money. This is a one-off that we are doing right now with the housing builds we are going forward with. In Toronto and Ontario particularly, the province does not take on housing. It's the municipality that does. Can you talk a bit about that? Is that good or bad in terms of building more homes, especially for women who are fleeing violence?

• (1735)

Brian Harris: Yes. I think it's—

[Translation]

The Chair: Mr. Harris, I am very distressed to have to interrupt you.

That concludes our first discussion with our first guests.

I'd like to thank each and every one of you for agreeing to speak with us and speaking from your heart. I wish you safe travels home.

I will suspend the meeting for a few moments before we begin our second meeting.

• (1635)

_____ (Pause) _____

• (1640)

• (1740)

The Chair: Ladies and gentlemen, we are resuming the meeting.

I would like to give you a few instructions, as usual.

Before speaking, please wait until I recognize you by name. If you are on the video conference, please click on the microphone icon—

Ms. Ménard, do you want to speak?

Marie-Gabrielle Ménard: Yes, Madam Chair. Thank you.

We're at the beginning of the session. This is the first time we've heard from witnesses since our return, and I think there's a great lack of sensitivity in the room. There are a lot of colleagues who don't seem to be interested in the testimony and have been talking to each other throughout. Quite honestly, I find it distressing for

this committee. I would like to be heard on this. The decorum that we have always had honours us, so I frankly find it distressing.

The Chair: The point has been made, Ms. Ménard. If I can improve decorum in this room, I'll gladly do so. I will pay particular attention to that. Thank you for the comment.

I'll go back to my instructions for the participants.

Before speaking, please wait until I recognize you by name. If you are on the video conference, please click on the microphone icon to unmute yourself. When you are not speaking, your mike should be on mute. For members in the room, if you wish to speak, please raise your hand. For members on Zoom, please use the raise hand function.

For those on Zoom, at the bottom of your screen you can select the appropriate channel for interpretation: either floor, English or French. For those in the room, you can use the earpiece and select the desired channel. I would like to remind the witnesses that committee members can ask their questions in French or English. If they need interpretation, I would ask them to take the time to select the desired channel.

We have two witnesses for this second hour: Mitzie Hunter, president and chief executive officer of the Canadian Women's Foundation, and Kelly Tallon Franklin, chief executive officer of Courage for Freedom.

Ms. Tallon Franklin, the floor is yours for five minutes.

[English]

Kelly Tallon Franklin (Chief Executive Director, Courage for Freedom): Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the committee, presenters and parliamentary staff.

My name is Kelly Tallon Franklin. I am a human-trafficking survivor, and I'm the CEO of Courage for Freedom, a survivor-led organization with experience working across Canadian provinces and territories, from urban centres to rural, remote and fly-in communities.

I'm here today to speak about the gap that survivors of human trafficking continue to experience, the gap between being removed from immediate danger and actually having somewhere to safely rebuild their lives.

Over the past weeks, I've been in communities including Winnipeg, Kenora, Rainy River, Hamilton, London, Chatham, Niagara, Windsor, Ottawa and Toronto. Months prior, I was in Coquitlam, Kamloops, Steinbach, Saskatoon, Edmonton, Calgary, Montreal, Moncton, Peel, Sudbury, and the beautiful landscapes on treaty and non-treaty lands. I've been on the waterways, airways, trains and highways, at borders and in remote areas. I've been in ethnic, faith, language, orientation, socio-economic and cultural communities in homes, apartments, shelters and even tents. What I continue to hear is remarkably consistent and deserves your attention today.

We are asking systems that were not designed for human-trafficking survivors to carry the responsibility for human-trafficking survivors. Emergency shelters and transitional housing are essential. Shelter workers are doing important work, so this is not a criticism of those workers or those shelters. The problem is that human trafficking has been added to systems that were largely designed around homelessness and intimate partner or domestic violence, without consistently providing the specialized infrastructure, funding, security, training and long-term supports that trafficking survivors need. This distinction matters.

The needs may overlap, but the circumstances of exploitation are very different. A trafficking survivor may be dealing with multiple perpetrators, multiple buyers, ongoing coercion, threats, surveillance, financial control, trauma bonds, and continued relationships with people connected not only to the exploitation but maybe even to the crimes. Leaving is not always a single event for them. It can be a process. When that process happens inside a system designed primarily for short-term emergency shelter, we can unintentionally create another cycle of their instability and even criminalize survivors.

A survivor leaves exploitation, and there is no appropriate transitional placement, so they go to a shelter. The shelter cannot safely meet the level of security and specialized support required, so the survivor leaves or is transferred out. Then they move again, and the question becomes this: Where do they go next? That is the gap I am asking this committee to address.

We cannot define success as simply getting someone out of immediate danger. We need to create a pathway from safety to homed stability. This is particularly urgent with young people involved in the child welfare system. In the national report of shelters in 2025, there was a marked increase in that demographic.

When young people are already vulnerable to trafficking and we're moving them among group homes, foster placements, emergency shelters and hotels—and when even couch surfing becomes one of the arrangements—we are jeopardizing not only their safety but also their lives. We need to stop treating repeated placement changes as a solution. We need specialized options that recognize trafficking risks and provide continuities of care.

There's also a geographic inequity. A survivor should not have to leave their community, culture, family, school, employment and existing support networks simply because specialized housing does not exist. This is especially important in rural, northern, remote and fly-in communities.

There is another issue I really want to emphasize. It's that survivors are not the problem. Sometimes behaviours associated...cause them to be problematic. It happens when staff do not know what to do or how to look after them because they have a myriad of other issues that they're dealing with.

I'm asking the committee to consider five recommendations.

First, recognize human-trafficking housing as a specialized service need rather than assuming that existing shelter infrastructures can continue to absorb it—and failing.

Second, establish consistent human trafficking-informed standards of practice for trafficking-specific emergency and transitional shelters.

Third, provide stable, ongoing funding for specialized housing, security, staffing, training and wraparound supports to keep the community safe.

Fourth, build a genuine housing continuum—from emergency safety to transitional housing to permanent housing—for all women and girls.

● (1745)

Fifth, survivor leadership should not simply be inviting me to a committee. It should be asking us to review what your recommendations are before you finalize them.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Tallon Franklin. That will be the last word, but you will have the opportunity to come back to these recommendations with my colleagues.

Good afternoon, Ms. Hunter. You have the floor for five minutes.

[English]

Mitzie Hunter (President and Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Women's Foundation): Thank you so much.

Good evening, everyone. It is so great to be here. Thank you for the invitation to speak to the committee today on behalf of the Canadian Women's Foundation, which is Canada's public foundation for gender equality and justice.

The work of the Canadian Women's Foundation and of the organizations we support takes place on traditional first nations, Métis and Inuit territories. We're grateful for the opportunity to meet and work on this land.

The foundation advances gender justice and equality by growing support for grassroots feminist action, partnering with community organizations and building diverse leadership and knowledge for sustainable change. For more than three decades, we have addressed gender-based violence through funding, public education, research and advocacy. Since 1991 our generous donors and supporters have contributed over \$290 million to fund over 3,500 life-transforming programs throughout Canada, in every province and territory. Many of those are focused on gender-based violence, or GBV.

GBV shelters and transitional housing provide women, children and gender-diverse people leaving violence with access to safe and supportive living spaces. Funded five decades ago with a one-time grant, the shelter movement has led responses to GBV, expanding services and providing a pathway to living safely in community. Today, in addition to refuge from violence, shelters provide a range of essential services that include school liaison; accompaniment to medical, legal and administrative appointments; financial literacy; and housing workers. They are currently operating at a crisis level.

In terms of capacity pressures, what we're seeing is that it's severe across the shelter continuum. It is directly tied to the national housing and affordability crisis. Shelters are routinely operating above what is officially funded as the demand for services continues to increase. Because of the housing and affordability crisis, survivors are extending their stays in shelters, which means that fewer beds and units are available for new survivors. A report from Women's Shelters Canada shows that shelters provide services for increasingly diverse populations with complex needs and strive to fill system gaps, but capacity constraints and chronic underfunding make this work difficult.

A DAWN Canada report shows that accessibility should be the standard, not an afterthought. Disabled and deaf women, girls and gender-diverse people in Canada experience GBV at disproportionate rates. We need to fund and enforce physical, sensory, cognitive and communication accessibility, ensuring that shelters and transitional housing allow children and provide disability-related support.

The median year of GBV shelter construction in Canada is 1981, which means that half the shelter stock is at least 45 years old. Almost half, or 45%, will require major repairs. A further 31% are in need of minor repairs. Of those needing repairs, 53% lack the required funding. These older structures are much less likely to include accessibility features for people with disabilities. Again, infrastructure and uneven accessibility have emerged as among the most urgent and persistent challenges, particularly in remote, northern and indigenous shelters.

Accessibility barriers remain entrenched, with fewer shelters being fully accessible. Less than half of shelters, or 48%, are generally accessible for wheelchairs and mobility devices. These infrastructure and accessibility issues can force shelters to turn away survivors with accessibility needs or place them in spaces that do not fully meet their needs, undermining safety, dignity and inclusion. In some remote regions, including Nunavut, accessibility challenges are nearly universal amongst surveyed shelters.

Older women are facing a shelter gap. The lack of affordable housing has become a significant issue in the prevention of the abuse of older women, especially in rural areas.

● (1750)

With only 15 shelters for older women—

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Hunter, I have to interrupt you. Thank you very much for the presentation.

We're going to begin the discussion with the members, and we'll start with our Conservative colleague.

Mrs. Borrelli, the floor is yours for six minutes.

[English]

Kathy Borrelli: Thank you, Chair.

My first question is for Kelly Tallon Franklin.

Ms. Franklin, women may have different reasons for accessing shelters, but many women share a similar story in their pathways from being in an unsafe situation to securing support for stable housing. From your experience in working alongside women and children fleeing gender-based violence, can you describe the experiences and challenges they face in their effort to secure safe and secure housing?

Kelly Tallon Franklin: Thank you for the important question.

I can speak directly to those who are exiting human trafficking and sexual exploitation who might have a history of domestic partner violence and interpersonal violence. That's usually intersected through their lives, but for those who are exiting and looking for assistance to find safe housing that's emergent and then ongoing and transitional, the needs of a human trafficking and sexual exploitation survivor, as quoted in the DSM-5, are different in the responses they need for their trauma.

I can give you a quote. There was actually a study done and a report put out in the province of Ontario by Hiatus House to shelter workers. One of the things that a brave shelter worker who was quoted said was that whatever workers say that they know, they don't know. What's missing is their "understanding of the complexities and the many faces of human trafficking, resulting in the under-identification of human trafficking experiences", both within and outside the shelters. It gives survivors a feeling of "a lack of guidance and professionalism pertaining to their case management [and of] confidence [in] the course of action" that they could be provided. The support services actually can put survivors and clients within the shelter at risk. I'm quoting from the document.

The other thing I would say is that one of the issues is that we're trying to do more with less. In the 2026 national shelter survey summary and executive report, that's splashed across their banner. If you talk to any woman or girl who's been through the shelter system, they'll tell you what is going on, to the point that we're now seeing things like shelter shopping, and we're seeing things like regional referrals being refused. It's very harmful.

The worst-case scenarios are the continual transitions of women and girls, especially those with children, who are trying to keep their life together in one piece when, every six months, just when they feel like they're getting stabilized, a case manager is saying that it's time for them to go and they have nowhere for them to go.

• (1755)

Kathy Borrelli: It's interesting that you mentioned Hiatus House. Hiatus House provides services in my community of Windsor, and it does amazing work—

Kelly Tallon Franklin: It's excellent work, but it was work that was never intended for them to do. In 2014, the original studies on human trafficking asked all the committees at all levels of government to treat it as a unilateral issue and not dump it in with gender-based violence to cause those who are working in gender-based violence to have fewer resources and be expected to do more. Hiatus House has experienced this.

Kathy Borrelli: Gender-based violence is one of the number one crime situations in Windsor. I'm sure it's true in a lot of other—

Kelly Tallon Franklin: Absolutely.

Kathy Borrelli: —urban areas, so rather than be critical of them—

Kelly Tallon Franklin: No, we're not critical.

Kathy Borrelli: Okay. Thank you so much. That's great.

Let's just get to the nitty-gritty. This is our last meeting. I want to ask a question that can help us learn what to do. What steps can we take? Across Canada, in remote and urban neighbourhoods, what do you believe is required to ensure access to safe and stable housing for women? If you could make one recommendation to this committee arising from this study, what would you recommend?

Kelly Tallon Franklin: My one recommendation would be to make the housing suitable for the needs of the people you're trying to service. Ensure that it's transitional and consistent instead of having gaps and being piecemeal, which doesn't meet needs.

If you look at some of the reasons human trafficking was incorporated through the shelter system, there was already a build-in for them, being vendors of record, so it was easy to do payouts, get the money there and start the training. However, it didn't come with a lot of extra money. It didn't come with a lot of extra means.

The other thing is that if you start listening to what survivors are telling you about this from the perspective of domestic violence, interpersonal violence, gender-based violence and human trafficking, we know what the needs are. We've been making recommendations for a long time. If we take a look at all of the studies and all of the things that we've recommended in the past and start implementing them, it will be very helpful.

I was homeless until my brand new baby was three months old in 1988, and I'm now getting the same phone calls from girls that I used to make myself. That is abhorrent. That should not be happening.

• (1800)

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you for that testimony, Ms. Tallon Franklin.

Ms. Nathan, it's your turn. You have the floor for six minutes.

[English]

Juanita Nathan: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Through you, hello, Mitzie. How are you? It's great to see you here.

Thank you to both of the witnesses for being here today.

I wanted to ask you this, Mitzie, because of your past experience in the Ontario provincial government. Ontario is the only province that does not do housing. It lets the city or the region take care of housing.

In your new position, can you tell me a bit about what difficulties organizations or cities are facing because of this? What would be the advantage of provinces actually doing housing?

Mitzie Hunter: Thank you so much.

Through you, Madam Chair, it's really important that all levels play their part when it comes to housing. We talked about the different types of housing that are needed, such as the housing that is suitable for shelters and transitional housing of all types and in all areas, whether they're in large cities and urban settings or in our rural, remote and northern communities.

I didn't get a chance to say this in my opening statement, but I would very much ask for the committee's support.... Federal budget 2025 committed \$1 billion to Build Canada Homes for transitional and supportive housing for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. For women, housing insecurity and gender-based violence are intertwined issues. We see that in the work we do. Not only does gender-based violence force women and their children out of their homes, but women without housing also experience higher rates of violence, with homeless women experiencing some of the highest rates.

It is our understanding, through the Minister of WAGE, Minister Valdez, that she is actively in conversation with the housing minister about applying the Build Canada Homes fund to address issues with women's shelters, as well as to transitional housing for GBV survivors. We encourage the committee to fully support this approach, and we would encourage every level of government to be involved.

When we have our shelters running over capacity—most of them are actually providing more space than they have bed space and they are funded to provide—it really shows you that this is a crisis situation and needs the coordination of all levels.

Juanita Nathan: Thank you for that.

To follow up, are you seeing regional differences in access to shelter and transitional housing, particularly in rural, remote or northern communities? What are the community organizations telling you about that?

Mitzie Hunter: We definitely see that.

I was also going to share an example from Muskoka. It's in a rural area where shelters are full and money is given for a tent. That is what is offered.

It's a stark illustration that shelters are needed that are designed to meet the needs of certain populations, like older women who are leaving abusive situations and women who are precariously housed. Women and their children who experience disability are also some of the most vulnerable groups.

There is definitely a unique need for rural and remote communities, as well as northern communities, to have accessible shelter alternatives, particularly when women are experiencing gender-based violence or intimate partner violence.

• (1805)

Juanita Nathan: This past summer, Minister Valdez announced the renewal of the national action plan to end gender-based violence, which is backed by an additional investment of \$607.5 million over four years.

Do you support this renewal? How can the NAP be enhanced to address the needs of women, girls and 2LGBTQI+ individuals in need of shelter supports?

Mitzie Hunter: The Canadian Women's Foundation very much supports the national action plan to end gender-based violence, as well as the funding that is flowing to the provincial and territorial governments to implement the action plan.

It's very important that we see accountability for those resources within local communities and that we see those investments being made directly in programs and initiatives that are addressing the intimate partner violence, gender-based violence and sexual violence that we see. We know that sexual violence is the only violent crime in Canada that is on the rise, and that's something—

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you for the clarifications, Ms. Hunter. You will certainly have an opportunity to come back to it.

Ms. Larouche, you have the floor for six minutes.

Andréanne Larouche: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Hunter, thank you for being with us today. I was just taking notes as I was listening to you. However, for my first turn, I'll turn to Ms. Tallon Franklin.

Ms. Tallon Franklin, we have crossed paths in the past. One of the things we both champion is the fight against human trafficking. This is a cause that concerns us greatly.

You talked about your experience on the street with your child. For a while now, I've been talking about the fact that the issue of homelessness is still very much in the news. In Quebec, in September, we learned that a one-year-old child had been left alone, homeless, in an encampment in Montreal. The mother needed help. Your experience was in 1988, and it is still happening today, in 2026. This is deeply inhumane and unacceptable. It affects me a lot as a mother.

Obviously, there is a strong connection between escaping violence and the issue of poverty. We could also link it to the issue of trafficking victims. They become very vulnerable. There's a lot of talk about the need for women to leave an abusive situation. However, to do so, it isn't enough to walk through the door of a shelter; they also have to be able to recover and rebuild their lives afterwards. This is even more true for victims of trafficking.

Anyway, I'll let you finish what you were saying, because I'm not sure I grasped everything. I may have missed something in your answers. At the very end of your opening remarks, you talked about five proposals, but I noted four. I'll let you finish your remarks on the fifth proposal. Then I'll ask you my question.

[English]

Kelly Tallon Franklin: My fifth point is to strengthen coordination between child welfare, shelters, housing, and health and justice organizations and specialized human trafficking, sexual exploitation and IPV organizations, so that survivors are not repeatedly transferred between disconnected systems and do not experience a lack of best practices.

Thank you.

[Translation]

Andréanne Larouche: The solution really has to be systemic and we have to work on a number of upstream and downstream aspects. Based on your experience, the issue of financial insecurity can also apply to women who are victims of violence, such as trafficking victims.

How can this financial insecurity and the inability to find housing push a woman to stay around her abusive spouse or the person who uses her for trafficking? To what extent does financial vulnerability have an impact?

What can be done to prevent that or help a woman rebuild her life? Do we need to offer more services? Where do we start?

• (1810)

[English]

Kelly Tallon Franklin: The study is on harms, risks and gaps, so the answer to your question is yes. It's all three: harms, risks and gaps. It's not just a matter of a living wage for women and support for them with their children. It has another twist in it when it comes to human trafficking.

I would say that one of the responses that we need to look at is the infrastructure. It's what housing actually looks like, what is available to women and the disparity in equity of access between men and women.

I continue to assist women. Courage for Freedom has assisted over 3,800 minor-age survivors, and the first thing we do is housing, but most of the things we've done around housing have not been within the system. Co-operation within the system takes four to six weeks. At that time, people are re-risking themselves by returning into their house, their home.

For those who are in human trafficking, there's also an additional measure. A lot of those who are in human trafficking suffer at the hands of a perpetrator and are forced to commit coerced crimes. That criminalization and victimization then put a woman at risk to be able to even apply.

The other thing is their coerced credit. A lot of times, a trafficker uses a victim survivor's credit, and they burn it. Even when somebody gets on their feet and they're ready to transition into a shelter, stage two housing or RGI—rent-geared-to-income housing—they do not qualify, because their credit is upside down. The Province of Ontario has done something remarkable about that, and it would be recommended for every province. It is to reduce coerced debt, especially of women.

I just had a call a day ago from a woman who's fleeing violence. I know from her story that she has not identified as a human trafficking survivor. She doesn't even know that she is, and if she goes to a shelter, chances are they will not be able to flag it right away, get her appropriate care and keep her child safe. One of the things that traffickers do is use children. Making sure not only that women are safe in the shelters but that the children are safe too is very important.

I know you're hard on human trafficking, so thank you for your question.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you for those insights, Ms. Tallon Franklin.

Mrs. DeRidder, the floor is yours for five minutes.

[English]

Kelly DeRidder: Thank you, Madam Chair, and through you, thank you, Kelly, for being here today. Thank you for sharing your story and being so open about your own story. I as well shared mine and my path to recovery as an addict. In that world, we know that addiction also leads to human trafficking and vulnerability and everything surrounding it.

There are a couple of things that you talked about today that I would like to focus on. Moving forward, hopefully we'll see some change with the funding models with the current government.

The first is transitional housing, which you spoke about. I have a motion right now in the human resources, skills and development committee, and a piece of that motion is asking for transitional housing for exactly this. It's for people who need the help but would not be going directly to a shelter. It's so they can go into a safe home where they can start rebuilding their lives and getting back on their feet with their children and be in a safe space.

My question to you is this: In your experience, how do you think the lack of safe housing increases the risk and vulnerability to human trafficking and sexual exploitation?

Kelly Tallon Franklin: First, thank you for your question and your candidness about your own experiences. I think they're not our "stories"; they're actually lived experiences. I just champion everybody to use that phrase. They're not "fairy tales". They actually happen to us, as women and girls. What I would say is that, for those who are involved in human trafficking, some of them believe they're there by choice, yet they're not.

You have a window. I just finished training across the province in multiple children's aid societies and communities. The thing is, we have to be cognizant about what's happening to know what the responses are. We have to understand the language that human trafficking survivors speak, what their needs are and that the needs are different for gender-based violence victim survivors.

It is different. When we lump it all together, we make them survivors of either-or, not one or the other. Again, to the shelter executive directors who are on my speed-dial, this is not a criticism. Rather, we are weighing in to support you because you can't possibly meet all those needs. A human trafficking survivor responds differently to programming. They respond differently to therapies. They respond differently to all kinds of things, and if we are not immediately getting them into the places they need to be safe.... "Emergent response" does not mean you tell somebody, "You have to apply," and two weeks later, "We'll consider you," and, "Where's your money coming from to pay the base needs? Are you on OW or another form of a different provincial payment?" We have to stop that nonsense.

Then, also, really look at the flexibility. One of the great studies that came out from our recommendations was from the Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking. They have five mark points that say, "You need to remove some of the barriers to human trafficking survivors even in applying to get into the shelter." There is a bias against human trafficking survivors, or women who were involved in domestic violence and perpetrated it against another woman through their partner. Those kinds of things are biases against women and girls, that they are forced to suffer in criminal acts. Then we actually are shopping...for whether we'll take them into the shelter. Shame on us.

We have to put the lines down. We have to build the infrastructure. We have to have the transitional pathways in place. We shouldn't take somebody off the street and say, "In two years we're going to be able to transition you out," where we have no pathway. Then, when they apply for rent geared to income, they don't qualify.

For those in the municipality, they won't observe the priority protocols and the letters that we.... I know a young girl who is 23 and has two children, who is fighting for her life right now. We're going to have to move her out of province because there's nothing available to help her, even with a priority letter and with her being at school full-time. This is what I deal with every day.

• (1815)

Kelly DeRidder: Thank you so much for such an in-depth.... This is everything that we need to hear, discuss and talk about to make change.

Thank you for that.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you both, Mrs. DeRidder and Ms. Tallon Franklin, for your testimony and your trust.

Ms. Gladu, the floor is yours for five minutes.

[English]

Marilyn Gladu: Thank you, Chair.

Welcome to our witnesses.

Let's start with Kelly Tallon Franklin. I just want to thank you for your courage. You've helped human trafficking victims and survivors across the country and definitely in my riding, so thank you for that. You talked about the recommendations for the government, that they should recognize the specialized need for housing, estab-

lish the standards of practice for human trafficking survivors, provide funding for training in wraparound services, address the housing continuum and strengthen the coordination. Could you talk for a minute about this specialized need? What are the elements that housing appropriate for people who are coming out of human trafficking would have?

Kelly Tallon Franklin: They answer the phone and open the door. I'm sorry. That's as blunt as I can get, because when a human trafficking survivor is ready to exit, you have to move immediately, because if you don't.... The fact that they're starting to become unhinged emotionally, mentally, socially and physically.... Maybe their sobriety is at risk again or they're medicating. They're going to slip up with a trafficker and we could find them at the bottom of a lake or a river, or somewhere else.

I'm not exaggerating this. This is exactly what we go through. We've experienced it in your riding. I have driven to your office and on the way brought girls either in or out to where they need to go to get safe, because we're calling places and they have no beds available. They're shopping whether the survivor's suitable for their placement, even though there are allocated survivor beds in most agencies that they will not tell you about.

From there, once you get them through, they can't go through regular programming. They need to just sleep and heal at the beginning. The stages of recovery are different. If we're going to treat them and say, "You're on a schedule. You have to get up. You have to do chores. You have to do this," they're out of there and back to their trafficker, or they're going to recruit within, or they're going to cause problems and you're going to say they're non-compliant. When they get referrals to another shelter.... I have a girl who was in 30 group homes, foster placements and shelters by the time she was 16. She was so non-compliant because she had been institutionalized by the lack of care and concern that they had to move her to three different child protection services communities. They turn her out at eight o'clock in the morning. How is turning somebody out at eight o'clock in the morning helpful for their trauma care in any instance?

Stage two is helping them with basic life skills, their educational needs and the other things to help reintegrate them into a healthy life that doesn't include violence.

The next stage is helping them figure out how to budget and how to put their housing needs together. They then choose to move—they are not forced to move—rebuild their lives and continue the good cycle. Maybe they'll offer basement apartments that are legal to somebody else who needs help. That's how I started.

• (1820)

Marilyn Gladu: Excellent. Thank you.

Now I have a question for Ms. Hunter. I know the government has put forward renewed funding for the national action plan to prevent gender-based violence. It's \$607.4 million. I believe your foundation endorsed that funding.

Can you talk about how important it is to prevent the cycle of violence that's just exacerbating the lack of housing and shelter space?

Mitzie Hunter: Thank you so much. Yes, we definitely support a strategy that ends gender-based violence. I would note that five provinces, I believe, in Canada have declared gender-based violence or intimate partner violence a crisis, with Newfoundland and Labrador being the most recent. It really shows the grave concern that we have for the safety of women, girls and gender-diverse people.

Every 48 hours in Canada, a woman or girl is killed. We know that when they choose to leave an abusive relationship, it's the most risky time. What we've been discussing in terms of the availability of safe spaces for them to go to is absolutely essential for their safety and even their survival.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you for the clarifications, Ms. Hunter.

Colleagues, I made the decision to end the meeting at 6:38 p.m., since the suspension went a little longer and we have two hours. Is that okay?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Ms. Larouche, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

Andréanne Larouche: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Thank you again to both witnesses, Ms. Hunter and Ms. Tallon Franklin, for being here today.

I'm trying to understand how the experience of senior women in violent situations is different. I touched on this briefly during the first hour of the meeting.

I have a quick question for Ms. Tallon Franklin, and then I'll go to Ms. Hunter.

Can you dispel the myth that human trafficking only affects young people? Women of all ages can be trafficked, right?

[English]

Kelly Tallon Franklin: Human trafficking in the elderly demographic is actually on the rise, because anywhere a trafficker can make money, they're not going to leave money on the table. We're seeing more and more affecting young women, older women, women with a disability and also migrant women and girls. We're seeing

things like forced begging or where they're intersecting labour trafficking with other things. For example, the women are expected to also comply in sex trafficking or CSAM, even camera work with children or to offer their children up for camera work.

It's harder for them to find placements in shelters if they have children. It's harder if they have a support pet. They're forced to leave a support dog that's registered, all to try to go into a shelter and deal with their issues.

When women are older, there's a lot of bias, questions like "Why are you here? Don't you have family?" I've heard shelter workers openly ask those questions. Then we intersect this with another type of gender-based violence: elder abuse. That might be the reason they're not living with family or other members of their community. That is the myth, and we just dispelled it. One of the hardest survivors to place anywhere—in a program, in care, in a shelter or in any level of housing—is a senior woman.

• (1825)

[Translation]

Andréanne Larouche: Ms. Hunter, can you add to that? You have 15 seconds. What can be done to better support senior women in these shelters?

[English]

Mitzie Hunter: Senior women need shelters that are designed—

[Translation]

The Chair: I'm so sorry, Ms. Hunter, but I have to interrupt you because Ms. Larouche's time is up.

Mrs. Roberts, you have the floor for five minutes.

Anna Roberts: Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: You said it in French. Well done.

[English]

Anna Roberts: I am practising.

My first question is for Kelly.

Thank you, Kelly. I know we've talked before on this topic, and I'm very passionate about it. Listening to your concerns gives me that strength to keep fighting against human trafficking.

As we know, Canada has become a hub for human trafficking. We have provinces in this country—starting with Halifax, Ontario, P.E.I., New Brunswick, Saskatchewan and then going on down the list of provinces—that are experiencing the high risk of human trafficking. We also know that it makes \$239.1 billion U.S. internationally and is the third-largest criminal money-maker in the world, soon to catch up to number one.

I get very frustrated. I've done undercover with police officers, and I've seen first-hand what these creeps—excuse the language—deserve. Here's my simple question: Do you feel that, in order for us to end human trafficking and protect the survivors, the laws need to meet the crime and these guys should get maximum sentences with maximum penalties, yes or no?

Kelly Tallon Franklin: Well, I can tell you that when I first came out, I had a very extreme view, and it extended far past just criminalization of those for whom we needed justice. I had to heal from that. My answer in the short term is yes. My answer in the long term is that we need to concurrently be educating men and boys.

However, when a woman or girl I have put in a shelter gets out and transitions and is not even transitioned for three months into housing before her perpetrator gets time served and is now crawling up her balcony and shooting her dog—when she's just re-established herself in a safe place and there are all kinds of breaches—I'm sorry, but it does not match the crime. The crime is gendered, yet there is no equity in our judicial system to ensure the safety not only of the survivor of the crime but also of the community. They are not afforded the time in incarceration to reform themselves the way that they....

I'll tell you this: I have done time, and I chose to reform myself during my time. You have a choice, but the justice does not fit the crime. The number of women and girls I've moved because of failed bail, ankle bracelets taken off, traffickers breaking into shelters and traffickers using those they are coercing and pimping who are dependent on their transitional drugs.... They are paying them off with transitional drugs in order to infiltrate our women's shelters.

I'm sorry, but our executive directors can't speak to this. They want to be equitable and fair to those in the trans community and every community, but we are putting women and girls at risk over and over and over. The police are sick of it, too.

Anna Roberts: Thank you for that. Many of the survivors I've spoken to say exactly the same thing.

Kelly Tallon Franklin: They will no longer testify, because they are afraid.

Anna Roberts: That's right. It's because they are afraid.

Kelly Tallon Franklin: We have actually gone from a 2% conviction rate in Canada to 1%, because witness protection is not being guaranteed.

• (1830)

Anna Roberts: My next question is for Mitzie.

My question for you is going to be the same. I don't know if you've ever heard of EVE. It's an organization: End Violence Ev-

erywhere. It's funded and organized by a young lady by the name of Cait Alexander, whom we've also had here as a witness. She was so afraid for her life that she had to leave the country. Why? It's because her perpetrator did not get the sentence he deserved and continued to harass her. Whenever she comes to Canada, she has to come with security.

Why is the law not strong enough to protect someone who's living in this country and is forced to move away? Do you think the laws need to meet the crime, yes or no?

Mitzie Hunter: Definitely. The laws should be there to protect women, girls and gender-diverse people, particularly those who sometimes hesitate to call out for help and support, because they're not getting the right types of help and support.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Hunter.

That's it for Mrs. Roberts' turn.

Ms. Ménard, you're the last speaker. The floor is yours.

Marie-Gabrielle Ménard: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Yes, we're almost out of time. I'll try to be brief because this is an important issue and I want to make sure there's enough time to put forward a notice of motion for a study based on three deeply troubling observations.

According to Statistics Canada, hate crimes targeting sexual orientation and gender identity increased by 29% between 2022 and 2024, 2SLGBTQIA+ people continue to face disproportionate levels of hatred, harassment, threats and violence across Canada, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people continue to face disproportionate barriers to safety, dignity and inclusion. I therefore move:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee undertake a study of no fewer than eight meetings regarding hate, violence and discrimination targeting the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in Canada, including the factors contributing to these trends, the experiences and safety concerns of affected communities, the effectiveness of existing measures to prevent and respond to hate, and measures that could be taken to strengthen the safety and security of 2SLGBTQIA+ people and communities; that the committee report its findings and recommendations to the House and that, pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee request that the government table a comprehensive response.

My colleagues will receive a copy in both official languages shortly.

Thank you, Madam Chair. I believe I have a few minutes left.

The Chair: Yes, you have three minutes and two seconds.

Marie-Gabrielle Ménard: Thank you.

Ms. Tallon Franklin, I believe I speak on behalf of the women who make up this committee when I say that your courage is remarkable. Your testimony also gives us hope. You have found the strength and resilience to continue lifting up women who have experienced the unthinkable.

This summer, I had the opportunity to meet with Un toit pour elles, an organization that supports survivors of human trafficking. I see Ms. Hunter is familiar with it. You've already mentioned certain considerations. If we were to envision a physical place, a shelter or transitional home, would it have to have certain physical or architectural characteristics to support people's recovery?

[English]

Kelly Tallon Franklin: Absolutely. First of all, survivors and those who have experienced gender-based violence have been disenfranchised by the thinking that they're not their own experts. If they're still above the grass, they're experts.

The first thing I'd ask that you do is to listen to the plans of survivors, because when the systems have failed and there haven't been supports, survivors will take and put people in their own homes and in their own lives to build back. The survivor community at all levels is very strong. Even though we might kibitz and argue a bit, don't get in the middle of that. It's like family.

There are recommendations for the types of housing. If we could coordinate a national plan—

• (1835)

[Translation]

Marie-Gabrielle Ménard: Madam Chair, I can't hear the witness.

[English]

Kelly Tallon Franklin: If we could have a national plan in which every province had one or two coordinated human trafficking supported houses to start, then we could inter-refer for safety. That means that you would work with the provinces, and the provinces would work with their municipalities.

In order for the funding to flow federally down to the provinces, they need to meet the guidelines that the survivors set for what you need to do. Then, on the coordinated services, there should be no money going to any places or spaces that say they're doing the human trafficking work, unless they meet the standard of training that survivors dictate is necessary. That means not sending them back out on the street to put their kids at risk or cause them to go miss-

ing. That includes my indigenous sisters, my sisters and even my brothers who are stuck in this.

We have the solutions. We just need to put them together and get it rolling instead of having more meetings.

[Translation]

Marie-Gabrielle Ménard: Thank you.

I'll go to you very briefly, Ms. Hunter.

As you said, many transitional homes are 40 years old—

The Chair: I'm sorry, Ms. Ménard, but your time is up.

That brings us to the end of the second hour of the meeting.

I can see how deeply you care about this issue, dear witnesses. Ms. Hunter and Ms. Tallon Franklin, thank you for taking the time to be here with us. You've helped us better understand this very important issue. I wish you a wonderful evening.

Do my colleagues agree to adjourn the meeting?

Go ahead, Mrs. DeRidder.

[English]

Kelly DeRidder: Just before we adjourn, I have one thing to say. This is addressed to the committee and the committee only, not to the witnesses or anybody who may be listening in the room.

There were a few unfortunate things I noticed happening today, and I hope we can move together in a very respectful manner.

I was told that I was being disrespectful and taking away time by putting a motion on notice. I do believe that this study is very important. I chose the path of least resistance to do so. Then a motion was put on notice right after that. To already try to say that I'm going with hate here.... I'm putting it on the record right now, today, that these motions have nothing to do with hate and everything to do with women.

I'll leave it at that.

Marilyn Gladu: I move to adjourn.

[Translation]

The Chair: Does everyone agree to adjourn the meeting?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: The meeting is adjourned.

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