



**UFCW Canada Submission
in Support of *Bill C-247*,
An Act to amend the Criminal Code
*(controlling or coercive conduct)***

**UFCW CANADA SUBMISSION IN SUPPORT OF
BILL C-247, AN ACT TO AMEND THE CRIMINAL CODE (CONTROLLING OR COERCIVE CONDUCT)**

In representing over 250,000 members across Canada, of whom more than 50 percent are women, UFCW Canada has a keen interest in supporting working women and their families in this country. We welcome the opportunity to provide a written brief in support of *Bill C-247, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (controlling or coercive conduct)*, and the efforts made to address the complex nature of gender-based violence (GBV). As we honour the lives of victims of gender-based violence, we support this bill and this important initiative to prevent future tragedies in intimate partner abuse.

Domestic violence and violence against women (VAW) are critical issues to our membership. The effects can extend beyond the home and into the workplace. A national study by the Canadian Labour Congress and Western University's Centre for Research & Education on violence against women & children found that 82 percent of respondents who experienced domestic violence said it hurt their job performance.

The home has also become the workplace for many women since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is no coincidence that reports of gender-based violence in the home have also spiked. As such, we believe that the introduction of *Bill C-247* is timely as it acknowledges just how harmful non-physical violence is to victims. Ultimately, it is a welcome step towards addressing public perception about the spectrum of actions and consequences of misogyny and violence against women.

Still, as a voice for working women in this country, we must emphasize that the federal government has more work to do combat violence against women. Women trying to escape abuse or who are survivors of intimate partner violence need paid leave, reasonable unpaid leave, options for flexible work arrangements, and guaranteed job security if they are to properly address the violence they experience at home.

To achieve this, UFCW Canada reiterates the calls made by Women's Shelters Canada and our fellow partners for a bold "all-of-government" national action plan on ending violence against women and gender-based violence. Any efforts to address violence against women holistically must be adequately funded; and in order for the federal government to also fulfill its commitment to address the recommendations raised by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, it must consult and work closely and with Indigenous women and legal experts to do that.

Advocates have been tirelessly pushing for a coordinated federal strategy. Women's Shelters Canada and their collaborators developed and proposed a plan in [2015](#) and have since reissued a call for a National Action Plan (NAP) in [2020](#), in light of the pandemic.

The NAP underscores that a strategy to address violence against women in Canada must be:

- grounded in an intersectional women's human rights framework, responsive to international norms, obligations, and standards throughout;

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- an all-of-government approach, inclusive of federal ministries in addition to the Department for Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) and the provincial/territorial Status offices;
- structured to provide continuous coordination and incentives for provincial and territorial adoption and leadership as solutions to the jurisdictional challenges of universal implementation and national standards;
- grounded in VAW/GBV community-based expertise and service sustainability;
- inclusive of a robust prevention agenda;
- guided by intersectional feminist expertise;
- attached to a realistic and substantial budget, commensurate with the pervasiveness of the social harm;
- productive of interventions that are culturally and linguistically accessible and safe;
- guided by a robust feminist Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) process; and
- harmonized with the parallel national action plan(s) on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG).

Respectfully Submitted by

**UFCW Canada &
UFCW Canada National Council Women and Gender Equity Committee**

UFCW Canada represents more than 250,000 workers throughout Canada. We represent workers in the retail, food processing, and hospitality sectors and in many workplaces with a high proportion of women and racialized members. Over 50 percent of UFCW Canada members are women and 40 percent of our members are under the age of 30.

Close to 10,000 UFCW Canada members work in federally-regulated sectors. They work at Canadian Forces Bases, in transportation, at credit unions, in the security sector, in the fisheries sector, in the milling sector (including flour, grain & malt), in the mining sector, and in other federally-regulated workplaces.

The UFCW Canada National Council Women and Gender Equity Committee provides women members with tools that can help them become engaged in their workplace, their union, and in their communities. The Committee also advises the UFCW Canada National Council on issues of primary concern to women members.