

House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

December 10, 2024

Dear Chair Kramp-Neuman and Members,

Please accept our submission to the Standing Committee on the Status of Women regarding *Hate Motivated Violence Targeting the 2SLGBTQI+ Community*.

Our brief is a call for calm, rational discussion of this important topic and will address three issues.

1. The rise in reported hate crimes against the “2SLGBTQI+” community compared to the statistics on violence against women in Canada

Statistics Canada has reported that in 2023, hate crimes targeting sexual orientation increased 69% from the previous year. According to Egale Canada, from 2016-2023, “police-reported hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation have increased a staggering 388%.” These numbers are indeed alarming, but it is important to note that included in these statistics are acts of mischief such as vandalising rainbow crosswalks or tearing down rainbow flags.

On the other hand, the Standing Committee on the Status of Women exists to study matters related to the status of women, and in this area, the reality is grim. According to Statistics Canada, an average of 102 women and children are murdered in Canada each year. Between 2011 and 2021, 1,125 females were murdered.¹ In 66 per cent of those cases, the killer was an intimate partner, a husband or a boyfriend. Data compiled by the Canadian Femicide Observatory in 2022, revealed that 184 women and girls were violently killed, primarily by men. That amounts to one woman or girl being killed every 48 hours.²

2. Provincial policies to protect children and adolescents from political ideologies and medical harm must not be conflated with “hate motivated violence against the 2SLGBTQI+ community”

The committee’s study includes an examination of policy proposals by three Canadian provinces which allegedly “attempt to roll back 2SLGBTQI+ inclusive policies in school.” It is our position that these policies are essential and do not promote hate against the “2SLGBTQI+ community.” The policies in question require schools to inform parents if their child begins identifying as transgender and wishes to socially transition, i.e. adopt a new name and new pronouns, at school.

¹ <https://www.canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/gender-based-violence/facts-stats.html>

²

<https://canadianwomen.org/the-facts/gender-based-violence/#:~:text=In%202020%2C%20160%20women%20and,killed%20by%20violence%20in%202019.>

All existing knowledge about adolescent development states that adolescence is a time of identity development and experimentation. Transgender identities in adolescence are therefore highly likely to be transient. However, social transition is a very powerful psychosocial intervention that serves to concretize the transgender identity into the minds of adolescents, making medical interventions in the form of puberty suppression, hormones and surgeries much more likely. It is therefore essential that parents be informed if their child has embarked upon this path. In fact, given that many of the adolescent girls who seek puberty suppression, testosterone and bilateral mastectomies are same-sex attracted, these policies are essential to safeguarding the lesbian community.

It is extremely harmful to vulnerable young people to conflate these important policies with hate against the 2SLGBTQI+ community. It sends the message that their government seeks to cause them harm when the opposite is true. Such rhetoric instills unnecessary fear and anxiety in an already at risk group. This is irresponsible and dangerous.

3. The importance of nuance and calm, rational discussion about controversial cultural issues as a means to combat online radicalization in all its forms.

Online echo chambers can be dangerous places. Radicalization is a serious issue that poses a threat to many groups in society. Examples such as the 2018 Toronto van attack that was motivated by hate against women and the 2023 attack against a University of Waterloo gender studies class highlight the dangers of extremist online circles. This is a threat that must be taken seriously.

Egale Canada makes a mockery of the seriousness of this issue when conflating provincial policies aimed at protecting women's spaces and sports and young people from medical harm with hate and rising violence.³

Our Recommendations

We urge the committee to listen to a range of viewpoints on this important issue. The debate surrounding pediatric gender medicine, the presence of gender identity ideology in our schools, and the protection of female-only spaces and sports must be approached with civility, reason, and respect for diverse opinions. Unfounded accusations of hate only serve to stoke the flames of division, fuel the potential for extremist actions, and hinder progress on finding balanced solutions.

Sincerely,

Caroline Mendoza, on behalf of *Women's Rights Matter*

About Women's Rights Matter

Women's Rights Matter is a Canadian non-profit organization. We are a non-partisan volunteer-driven grassroots organization that focuses on advocating for women's rights in Canada.

³ <https://egale.ca/rainbow-action-hub/#tab-hate>