

Domestic Violence in Belize Motion, 2022.

WHEREAS, Domestic Violence is recognized as a widespread international public health and human rights issue which, in all its forms, has tremendous physical, mental and emotional consequences on its victims, children and other family members and has far reaching detrimental social, health and economic impacts on nations;

AND WHEREAS, Domestic Violence constitutes abuse including physical, psychological, sexual, emotional, financial or other aggressions, inflicted by people in the family environment or in intimate partner relationships, which generally targets the most vulnerable populations, namely girls, women and older adults, and almost always occurs inside a residence and most often at the home of the victim or the perpetrator;

AND WHEREAS, it is established that Domestic Violence is a crime and a violation of human rights which affects every member of our community and if the cycle is not broken it continues to tear apart our families and our social fabric;

AND WHEREAS, as reported by the Belize Crime Observatory, at least 60% of Domestic Violence cases registered during 2020, were the result of intimate partner violence;

AND WHEREAS, the Belize Crime Observatory reported that during January to November 2021, there were 2,155 reports of Domestic Violence to the police where 78% of these reports were made by females and 32% of these cases are open cases;

AND WHEREAS, an effective response to Domestic Violence requires a multi-sectoral approach to ensure prevention, protection, and provision of services for survivors and successful prosecution of perpetrators;

AND WHEREAS, Plan Belize, through the implementation of a progressive Women's Agenda, aims to strengthen and expand measures to ensure the safety and security of women and children by, inter alia:

- holding a zero-tolerance position on violence against women;
- financially supporting the operation of emergency shelters and transitional homes for women and their children;
- implementing the domestic violence and sexual violence laws and protocols for the protection of women and children;
- providing free counselling and legal aid service for survivors of violence; and
- supporting mandatory counselling for perpetrators of domestic violence;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House:

1. Denounces and condemns Domestic Violence, in all its forms, as a crime and a violation of fundamental human rights;

2. Supports the call for additional resources to further strengthen the interventions, safeguards and public awareness required to effectively address Domestic Violence in Belize;
3. Will undertake legislative review aimed at filling gaps and putting in the necessary reforms for the response to Domestic Violence;
4. As national leaders, takes a zero-tolerance position with regard to Domestic Violence;
5. Prioritizes Domestic Violence as a national issue of significance and pledges to take individual and collective actions to end this plague in our constituencies.