

EX-1. 129



Deputation submitted to: Executive Committee, City of Toronto

Submitted by: Wendy Komiotis, Executive Director, METRAC

Date: July 28, 2011

Thank you Mayor Forde, Councilors and Staff, this deputation is submitted on behalf of METRAC, an award-winning organization that works to prevent violence towards diverse women and youth and advances safety, justice and equity for everyone. Since 1984, we have carried out our mission through collaborative and innovative public education, community safety audits, peer-based youth violence prevention work, community-based research and policy development. Our programs foster a safer city, free from violence and the threat of violence.

Community safety and violence against women and youth are pressing issues. Violence against women is ranked as the fifth most pressing social issue and the leading cause of injury, disability and premature death for women, who make up 52 percent of Toronto's population (www.toronto.ca). Of the 19 million Canadians who reported having a current or former spouse in 2009, six percent reported being physically or sexually victimized by their partner or spouse in the preceding five years. Women most often reported repeated and serious forms of violence, and Canadians aged 25 to 34 were three times more likely to report being physically or sexually assaulted by a current spouse in the previous 12 months (Statistics Canada).

Since 1984, METRAC's leadership in preventing violence and promoting community safety has been critical to Toronto's health and well-being. Our safety initiatives have enhanced municipal by-laws and improved neighbourhoods, streets, underground parking, apartment buildings, parks, campuses and public buildings across the city. Our audit work with the Toronto Transit Commission has increased safety for millions of commuters. Our work has resulted in designated waiting areas and the late night stop program which supports the safety of women who must work late at night and in the early hours. Our education work has touched thousands of residents and helped people work together to reduce and prevent violent crimes, bolster equity and understand where to go for help after a violent incident.

Research shows that community services targeting youth, children and families help to reduce violence and criminal behaviour in cities. With every \$1 invested in violence prevention efforts, up to \$7.16 is saved in the healthcare, legal and other sectors. For every \$1 spent in reducing opportunities for violence and victimization, up to \$7.14 is saved (U.S. Department of Justice, 2000). METRAC's results as an organization demonstrate the good economic sense of municipal investment in violence prevention. In 2010, we provided service and educational support to 14,489 diverse individuals and for every dollar the City of Toronto invested in METRAC's work through its Community Services Program, the organization matched it fourfold, garnering other public and

private funding to contribute to Toronto's safety. Through feedback interviews and surveys, community stakeholders have told us that our work is "unique" "fills gaps" and "innovative" and have praised us for our strength in consultation. They have recognized METRAC's "important role in the community".

Cities that develop problem solving partnerships involving different agencies can reduce crime and violence between 11-21%. The long-term benefits of crime/violence prevention have proven to be 6 times greater than those of incarceration (United Habitat, Making Cities Safer, 2007).

As you have heard from presenters before me, we're not the only ones who support the city's well-being through excellent programming and an exceptional return on investment. METRAC proves the importance of the Community Services Program and its funding to city-based organizations. To cut the already modest funds within the Community Services Program would be a detriment to our city and its residents and would make a serious negative impact on the good work being done by many organizations to improve our neighbourhoods. METRAC is thankful for the support it receives from the City of Toronto and asks that the great value of its Community Services Program in supporting the quality of life and vitality of Toronto be committed to into the future.