

Cuts in social programs hurt women, councillor says ^[1]

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Source: Globe and Mail

Format: Article

Publication Date: 6 Dec 2011

EXCERPTS

On Tuesday's anniversary of the Montreal massacre, Councillor Mike Layton said cuts to social programs in the city's 2012 budget are unacceptable in the fight to end violence against women.

More than 60 people heard him speak at Mount Sinai Hospital to mark the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. The day is held in memory of the 14 women who were murdered at École Polytechnique in 1989.

"The city must take into account women and girls' reality in creating policy," said Mr. Layton, the councillor for Trinity-Spadina. "We need to consider the very real and violent situation many women face, both economically and physically."

In an interview after his speech, he said the city's proposal to close Bellwoods House, a women's shelter in his own ward, would be "a disaster."

"We've asked women to get out of those dangerous relationships for their own health and we're not doing anything to support them in that, or we're taking away the support that was there.

"Why are we cutting services to the most vulnerable in the name of efficiencies when we're not even spending the money we took in last year?"

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Mr. Layton said he was sure his father would have been proud that he was speaking out on the issue.

"I think Jack left us very specific instructions that we were to continue this work and redouble our efforts," Mr. Layton said. "There's still so much work that needs to be done."

- reprinted from the Globe and Mail

Region: Ontario ^[2]

Tags: gender ^[3]

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