

We Need a Law



Pre-born Victims of Crime:

Victims unrecognized by Canada's law

Canada is failing its pregnant women.

Women who choose motherhood should be honored and respected in that choice. Allowing these offenders to get away, quite literally, with murder does nothing to empower women or protect real choice.

It is well established that the risk of violence against women increases when they are pregnant, yet consequences for their attackers do not increase at all. Right now, pre-born children are not recognized as persons for the purpose of the law, so their death or injury as victims of crime cannot be legally counted.



Each of these men knew the woman they were attacking was pregnant. They didn't care. And neither does our justice system.

2006

Manjit Panghali, along with her pre-born child, was killed and then set on fire by her husband. She was identifiable only by dental records. Her husband was charged with only one count of murder.

2008

Tashina General was strangled by her boyfriend while pregnant with a son she had named Tucker. The killer was charged with one count of murder and served less than 10 years in prison.

2014

Cassandra Kaake was murdered when she was 7 months pregnant with a girl she had already named Molly. Cassandra's killer was charged with one count of murder.

2017

Arianna Goberdhan was 9 months pregnant when she was murdered by her husband in Pickering, Ontario. Her pre-born daughter, whom she had named Asaara, was also killed in the attack. Her husband was charged with one count of murder.

Canada needs a pre-born victims of crime law so criminals who attack a pregnant woman can be sentenced appropriately by our courts.

The stories could go on – there are more than 80 cases in recent Canadian history of women who died along with their pre-born children. Many others face assaults that harm both them and their pre-born children. It is time for legislators to ensure that true justice is served in the case of violent crime against pregnant women.

In 2016, 209 legislators voted against Cassie & Molly's Law, a pre-born victims of crime law which was inspired by Cassandra Kaake's death along with her daughter Molly.

Had it passed, the murderer of Arianna Goberdhan and her pre-born daughter Asaara would have been justly sentenced for both deaths the following year. Instead, much of the conversation around that bill was distracted by fearmongering and abortion politics. Canada's lack of abortion law should not detract from the injustices these women and children faced.

These children matter, regardless of their location at the time of the crime. These women matter, mothers who desire life for both themselves and their babies.

It is time for legislators to ensure that true justice is served in cases of violent crime against pregnant women.

