



# DEBATES OF THE SENATE

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## **NORTH SIMCOE VICTIM SERVICES**

### **CONGRATULATIONS ON TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY**

Statement by:

The Honourable Gwen Boniface

Thursday, October 25, 2018

## THE SENATE

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### NORTH SIMCOE VICTIM SERVICES

#### CONGRATULATIONS ON TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Hon. Gwen Boniface: Honourable senators, I rise today to express my deep appreciation to North Simcoe Victim Services on their twentieth anniversary of service to our community. It was founded with a vision to provide a much-needed service of crisis response and caring support to victims of crime, tragic circumstance or disaster to people in the Orillia area. I had the great privilege to swear in the first cohort.

As a community-based, charitable organization, they rely on specially trained volunteers who provide emotional support and practical assistance to victims in the aftermath of what is often the worst day of their lives, operating 24 hours a day, year round. They assess victims' immediate needs and offer referrals to other community services. The help they provide at the scene allows first responders to do what needs to be done.

This essential agency exists due to the dedicated volunteer team of over 100 people who provide clients with care, compassion and empathy. They are a tireless and integral resource to the law enforcement community, ensuring safety and anonymity to the

people they serve. In fact, last year alone, volunteers donated over 28,000 hours, serving almost 500 clients.

This group conducts extensive volunteer training, with a special focus on women and children in need. This includes raising awareness and providing support for victims of domestic abuse, intimate partner violence and sexual assault. Since October is Child Abuse Prevention Month, it is a timely reminder of the importance these services provide to communities.

The organization has established partnerships with the City of Orillia, Simcoe County, the Red Cross, Georgian College, and most recently collaborated with Lakehead University's School of Social Work on a human trafficking study.

I would like to personally salute the executive director, Frances Yarbrough. She has committed a lifetime to providing support to those in need. I'm also pleased to add that she was a recipient of the Senate 150th Anniversary Medal.

Please join me in congratulating North Simcoe Victim Services on accomplishing two decades of victim support, and wish them well and continued success in the important work that they do.

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