

Statement from the Hon. Gloria J. Epstein, Chair of the Independent Civilian Review Into Missing Persons Investigations

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Independent Civilian Review into Missing Persons Investigations →

Mar 26, 2019, 15:52 ET

TORONTO, March 26, 2019 /CNW/ - The Hon. Gloria J. Epstein, Chair of the Independent Civilian Review into Missing Person Investigations today made the following statement in response to news that the Toronto Police Services Board has expanded the Review's Terms of Reference:

"I welcome the decision of the Toronto Police Services Board to amend the Terms of Reference governing our Review. By removing restrictions related to the police investigation of the crimes of Bruce McArthur, in the light of his conviction and sentencing for the murder of eight members of the community, my work can now correctly take a wider perspective.

"This change will permit me to ask even more questions and look directly into the facts surrounding the investigations relating to Mr. McArthur's victims. Until now, the Review was restricted in its ability to get to the bottom of these issues so as not to prejudice Mr. McArthur's criminal proceedings. Such a change will also assist in my efforts to address the fundamental issue of whether systemic bias or discrimination played a role in the investigation of missing persons and whether the current policies and procedures adequately protect against such bias or discrimination.

"At the same time, I recognize that the criminal prosecution of Kalen Schlatter is ongoing and as a result, the continued need for restrictions that place some limits on my ability to examine aspects of the related investigation.

"Although there is much work yet to do, I have already come to appreciate the deep sense of concern and anxiety shared by members of our LGBTQ2S+ communities as well as members of marginalized and vulnerable communities generally. In that respect, I see my task as not only to provide direct answers to complex questions but also to help foster a climate that leads to an enhanced relationship between Toronto police and our diverse communities.

"This decision also allows me to begin in earnest the external portion of our work. In the near future I will be announcing our robust plan to obtain input from members representing the widest cross-section of our community. I look forward to meeting with members of the community in a variety of ways to learn about their perspectives and experiences."

Web page: www.missingpersonsreview.ca

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