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Craig Hoy MSP
Convener
Social Justice, Housing and Local Government
Committee

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Dear Convener,

Support for women experiencing domestic abuse

In our Programme for Government, published in September 2026, we confirmed our commitment to making our £2 million national fund to leave permanent.

I am writing to inform the committee that we are repurposing funding in 2026-27 to expand the Fund to Leave so that it can fully meet the demand for support. To this end, we will make available an additional £2 million for the Fund to Leave for 2026-27. This takes the total investment in the fund to leave in 2026-27 to £4 million.

Recognising that financial barriers can trap women in abusive relationships, this increased investment will allow the national fund to leave to reach even more women and children, helping them take the first steps towards a stable, secure and independent future, free from abuse.

Early findings from Scottish Women's Aid on the impact of the £1.5 million fund to leave in 2025-26 indicated that over 1,500 women with 2,000 children were supported. We anticipate that £4 million could support up to 4,000 women and their children. The fund to leave is designed to reduce the financial pressures associated with leaving an abusive partner by providing support to help cover the essential items that women and children need when starting a new life in safety.

Yours sincerely,

SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE

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