

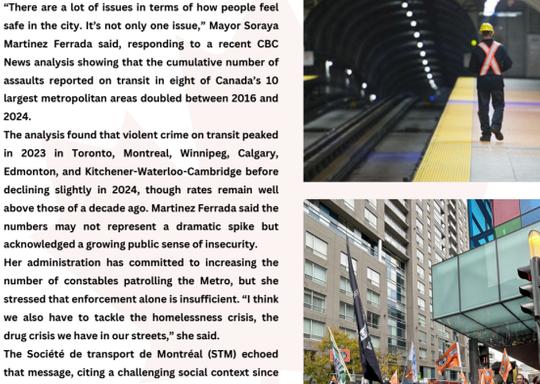
Dear friends and members of the Canadian Hispanic Congress. Thank you for your unwavering support of our work throughout the year. The CHC Team is grateful for your friendship and support, which make our work possible. Wishing you a truly joyful and peaceful Christmas season and a bright, successful and prosperous New Year 2026.

Monique Forster President Canadian Hispanic Congress

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Transit Violence Rising Across Canada – In Some Cities By Nearly 300%



According to Reuters, transit agencies across Canada are reporting a sharp rise in violent incidents, with some major cities seeing increases approaching 300% over recent years. The surge includes assaults, harassment, threats, and safety-related emergencies affecting both passengers and transit workers. Experts attribute this escalation to a range of social pressures, including the housing crisis, mental health challenges, substance use, and the lingering impacts of the pandemic.

Municipal officials emphasize that the rise in violence threatens public confidence in transit systems at a time when cities are trying to encourage ridership recovery and reduce emissions through sustainable transportation. Despite some pilot programs—such as outreach teams, enhanced surveillance, and early intervention strategies—many argue that transit violence reflects deeper structural issues that policing alone cannot solve.

Transit unions have raised alarms, saying frontline staff are facing unprecedented risks and calling for urgent measures such as increased security presence, mental-health intervention teams, and expanded crisis-response training, according to Reuters.

Advocates say meaningful change will require coordination between governments, community organizations, health services, and housing programs. As incidents continue to rise, national discussions are intensifying around how to protect transit users while addressing the root causes of urban insecurity.

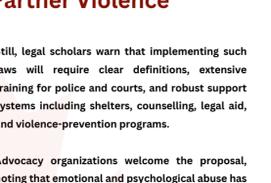


Montreal Officials Pledge Action as Transit Safety Concerns Rise

Montreal transit officials and the city's new mayor say they are taking steps to address growing concerns about safety on the city's bus and Metro systems, following new data showing rising transit-related assaults in major Canadian cities, according to the CBC.



"There are a lot of issues in terms of how people feel safe in the city. It's not only one issue," Mayor Soraya Martínez Ferrada said, responding to a recent CBC News analysis showing that the cumulative number of assaults reported on transit in eight of Canada's 10 largest metropolitan areas doubled between 2016 and 2024.



The analysis found that violent crime on transit peaked in 2023 in Toronto, Montreal, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, and Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge before declining slightly in 2024, though rates remain well above those of a decade ago. Martínez Ferrada said the numbers may not represent a dramatic spike but acknowledged a growing public sense of insecurity. Her administration has committed to increasing the number of constables patrolling the Metro, but she stressed that enforcement alone is insufficient. "I think we also have to tackle the homelessness crisis, the drug crisis we have in our streets," she said.

The Société de transport de Montréal (STM) echoed that message, citing a challenging social context since the pandemic, with increases in drug and alcohol use and loitering in the system. Spokesperson Laurence Houde-Roy said these issues have led to more misconduct and vandalism, prompting the June 18 renewal of the STM's loitering ban to help constables intervene with those "who have no travel purpose."

The STM is also expanding safety measures, including a non-urgent text line (1-888-786-1119), increased staffing, 180 special constables, 30 safety ambassadors, and real-time monitoring through more than 2,500 cameras across the network.



MPs Recommend Criminalizing Coercive Control To Combat Intimate Partner Violence

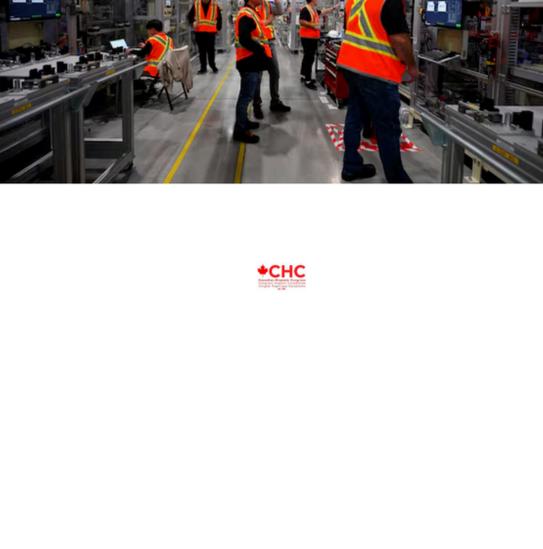
Members of Parliament are urging the federal government to move forward with legislation that would criminalize coercive control, a pattern of psychological abuse that includes intimidation, isolation, financial restriction, monitoring, manipulation, and other behaviors designed to erode a partner's autonomy. Experts say coercive control is often a precursor to physical violence and one of the strongest indicators of severe risk in intimate relationships, says the CBC.

Still, legal scholars warn that implementing such laws will require clear definitions, extensive training for police and courts, and robust support systems including shelters, counselling, legal aid, and violence-prevention programs.

The parliamentary committee argues that Canada must modernize its legal framework to better protect survivors, many of whom do not receive adequate support under current laws that focus primarily on physical harm. The recommendation aligns Canada with countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia, which have already adopted coercive-control legislation.

Advocacy organizations welcome the proposal, noting that emotional and psychological abuse has long been underrecognized despite its profound long-term impact. The report comes amid rising rates of intimate partner violence nationwide, highlighting a growing demand for stronger, trauma-informed responses.

If adopted, the proposal could represent one of the most significant expansions of Canada's domestic-violence legislation in decades.



The Miss Universe Pageant Drama Somehow Got Worse. Is This The Pageant's Breaking Point?



The turmoil surrounding the 2025 Miss Universe pageant has intensified even after Mexico's Fátima Bosch Fernández was crowned in Bangkok last week. The competition, already plagued by allegations of bullying, hospitalization, and claims of vote rigging, has since spiraled into an unprecedented crisis for the 74-year-old pageant, reports the CBC.

Several other contestants, including Miss Portugal, have also spoken out about discriminatory treatment. The crisis deepened Wednesday when arrest warrants were issued for two of the pageant's co-owners. In Thailand, an arrest warrant was issued for co-owner Jakkaphong "Anne" Jakrajutatip in connection with a fraud case after she failed to appear in court.

Miss Universe Haiti, Melissa Queenie Sapini, ignited further controversy Wednesday, describing her experience as a "nightmare" and alleging a rigged voting system, biased judging and favoritism. Her statement adds to a series of troubling incidents, including a Thai organizer publicly scolding Bosch on livestream, and two judges abruptly quitting, a fake drug scandal, and Miss Jamaica Gabrielle Henry's fall from the stage—an accident that left her hospitalized, as reported by the CBC.

Advocacy organizations welcome the proposal, noting that emotional and psychological abuse has long been underrecognized despite its profound long-term impact. The report comes amid rising rates of intimate partner violence nationwide, highlighting a growing demand for stronger, trauma-informed responses.

In the days following Bosch's win, at least two contestants—Miss Côte d'Ivoire Olivia Yace and Miss Estonia Brigitta Schaback—renounced their titles, citing ethical concerns and misalignment with pageant values. Additional national organizations, including those in France, Guyana and Ghana, are now reconsidering their affiliation due to transparency and fairness issues.

Pop culture analyst William Lee Adams said the unfolding scandals "tarnish the crown" and could weaken the competition if franchises withdraw. Still, he believes the organization has an opportunity for dramatic reform: "Addressing the legitimate concerns of participants could be the biggest glow-up in pageant history."



Feds Have Spent At Least \$530 Million On NextStar Battery Plant: Documents

According to Reuters, recently released documents show that the federal government has already invested at least \$530 million in the NextStar electric-vehicle battery plant in Windsor, Ontario, marking one of Canada's largest public contributions to EV manufacturing.

Critics question whether Canada is engaging in a subsidy race with the United States—whose Inflation Reduction Act offers massive industrial incentives that have intensified competition for EV-related projects. Supporters counter that Canada must act aggressively to remain competitive in a fast-changing industry central to climate goals and clean technology development.

The funds include a mix of direct incentives and support meant to secure the plant's construction and long-term production capacity in partnership with Stellantis and LG Energy Solution. Officials argue that the investment is essential to position Canada as a global leader in EV supply chains, reduce dependence on foreign battery production, and create thousands of high-skilled jobs. However, the magnitude of public funding has sparked debate about transparency and long-term value for taxpayers.

The documents also suggest that additional funding may be required as the project scales. Economists note that despite the high upfront cost, the investment could yield long-term benefits by expanding advanced manufacturing, strengthening regional economies, and anchoring Canada in the global battery market. Still, the controversy highlights ongoing tensions over industrial strategy and the role of government in major private-sector ventures.



CHC COMMUNITY

Canadian Hispanic Bar Association 20th Anniversary Gala Celebration



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CHC Community Services The Canadian Hispanic Congress invites you to visit our website and learn about the different resources and support made available by the government and community organizations!

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