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From: ZZG-Poverty <zzg-poverty@peelregion.ca>
Sent: October 1, 2020 2:29 PM
To: ZZG-RegionalClerk <zzg-regionalclerk@peelregion.ca>
Cc: ZZG-Poverty <zzg-poverty@peelregion.ca>
Subject: Letter to Regional Council- Relating to Bill 184

Hello,
Please find attached correspondence to Regional Council relating to agenda item on Bill 184 on October 8th, 2020.

Regards,

Peel Poverty Reduction Committee
Community Partnership – Region of Peel
poverty@peelregion.ca
www.povertyinpeel.ca

The views, thoughts, and opinions expressed in the text belong solely to the author, and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Region of Peel.

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~ Peel Poverty Reduction
Committee

Dear Regional Council

Oct 1, 2020.

Immediate Action to Protect Vulnerable Residents During a Global Pandemic

As you know, Ontario's Bill 184, *Protecting Tenants and Strengthening Community Housing Act, 2020* received Royal Assent on July 21, 2020, despite considerable concerns raised by tenants, homeless services and municipal leaders. The primary concern regarding this Bill is that it would create an additional pathway of eviction for landlords that would effectively circumvent the Landlord and Tenant Board (and also access to free legal supports provided there) and proceed directly to action by the Sheriff to change the lock.

The Peel Poverty Reduction Committee raised concerns about the risk of increased evictions in our letter to the province in May 2020, (attached) and urged them to develop a strategy to support tenants and landlords to prevent the crisis. We were concerned, even then, that the Landlord and Tenant Board had backlog of hundreds of eviction applications in Peel alone dating back before the eviction moratorium, and that more would come forward as a result of the economic challenges tenants faced during the pandemic, once the moratorium was lifted. We recognized that the resulting rush of eviction application could harm tenants, overwhelm municipal services and pose real risks of increasing exposure in a pandemic.

To date, there is no substantial program to support residential tenants or landlords facing these challenges, despite a viable model existing for commercial tenancies through the Federal Government's Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program. Now, to make matters worse, Bill 184 risks accelerating the pace of evictions through new policies that allow landlords to move to evictions without a hearing.

This will likely mean an increased risk of homelessness for vulnerable people, including those who are precariously housed, those whose incomes have fallen sharply as a result of COVID, and for people who are currently homeless and relying on already stretched homeless services.

This also creates concerns about our local municipal governments. Local governments have responsibility for many of the programs that respond to increasing homelessness. In Peel, those programs include rent geared to housing (Peel has traditionally had the longest waiting list in the province), the shelter system (which is at capacity) and the



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Housing Stabilization Fund which provides limited financial support for tenants to preserve their tenancy. All these resources have been strained for many years, are further stretched by the pandemic. While Peel has been able to house hundreds of homeless people during the pandemic, and expanded services on an emergency basis during the pandemic, the Region will be profoundly challenged in efforts to address the forthcoming crisis. Efforts by local governments in Peel to absorb a sharp increase in evictions and resulting homelessness will certainly bring significant new costs and substantial logistical challenges. Local business leaders have also been raising concerns about growing homelessness in the Region, and the acceleration of evictions will worsen those concerns.

It is also important to highlight that this crisis comes in the context of the second wave of a global pandemic where social distancing and staying home are key strategies to preventing the spread of COVID-19. This Region has consistently been very much on the front lines of managing the pandemic, and the issue of displaced tenants will be of concern in any effort to manage COVID-19.

Given these risks and the impact they have on local governments, we urge the Region, and the local municipalities to proceed on the following matters.

- 1) The local governments should reiterate the request to the Province to establish a program to prevent evictions and compensate landlords in residential tenancies similar to the Federal Government's Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program, as recommended by the Peel Poverty Reduction Committee in its letter of May 8th, 2020 (see attached).
- 2) The Chief Medical Officer of Health can declare that a significant increase in evictions is a public health concern and presents a threat to the community and monitor the need to act in his capacity safeguarding health, to prevent evictions during the second wave.
- 3) Local governments should demonstrate the depth of its concern and the seriousness of its objection to Bill 184 by joining as a party in the City of Toronto legal challenge against Bill 184 or mounting a legal challenge of its own.
- 4) The Region of Peel as the sole shareholder of the Peel Living should direct the corporation to refrain from using the new eviction pathway created by Bill 184. Specifically, Peel Living should refrain from seeking ex-parte evictions in both directly managed and privately managed buildings and continue to address evictions under



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the old rules, including ensuring that tenants have a hearing, before Peel Living proceeds with an eviction.

- 5) The Region of Peel as Service Manager should direct all housing providers to refrain from seeking ex-parte evictions using the new powers granted by Bill 184 for all households receiving Rent Geared to Income funding, and continue to address evictions under the old rules, including ensuring that tenants have a hearing, before housing providers proceed with an eviction.
- 6) Local governments should request a resumption of the provincial ban on evictions during the pandemic.

It is imperative that during this pandemic crisis, the Region of Peel, and Caledon, Brampton and Mississauga take the necessary steps to ensure that people remain housed. Providing vulnerable residents with housing stability and security during these uncertain times is a vital matter of public safety and public health.

Please act on this before the wave of evictions takes place.

Sincerely,
Peel Poverty Reduction Committee
poverty@peelregion.ca
www.povertyinpeel.ca



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Hon. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister
Hon. Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development
Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Hon. Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

May 8, 2020.

Re: Future Eviction Protection for Vulnerable Tenants

On behalf of the Peel Poverty Reduction Committee (PPRC) and its partners, we thank you for the work that the federal and provincial governments are undertaking in this unprecedented and challenging time, particularly for the most vulnerable populations in Ontario and in Peel.

Co-Chaired by United Way Greater Toronto and the Region of Peel, the PPRC was created in 2008, consisting of various sectors, partners, collaborative networks, community agencies and residents to address poverty and work to mitigate the effects of poverty for individuals and families in Peel. The PPRC Lived Experience Roundtable members have experienced firsthand what it means to live in poverty, and they have shared with us that they continue to face significant challenges when it comes to securing and sustaining housing. Housing prices continue to rise at such a fast pace that over 750,000 Ontarians need social housing.

We are writing to request that you take action to prevent future eviction orders for vulnerable Ontarians who cannot afford their rent on residential properties as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The current policies do not ensure that residential tenants who missed rent payments during the pandemic are protected from retroactive eviction applications.

We recognize that applying a longer-term restriction on evictions for late or unpaid rent will put pressure on residential landlords. As such, we encourage your governments to develop a full strategy to address those impacts on landlords by adopting an approach that fairly balances needs in the housing sector.

We appreciate the Ontario government's action ordering a temporary suspension on eviction orders for tenants who are asked to self-isolate or who cannot work and have difficulties paying their rent. We also appreciate both the federal and provincial governments' efforts to provide rent relief to commercial tenants and support



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commercial landlords through the Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program. This is a good example of a balanced approach that supports all parties in ensuring stability during this difficult time. We encourage your governments to adopt a similar approach that will mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on rent affordability for renters and residential landlords.

We thank your governments for making a difference during the COVID-19 pandemic and for the opportunity to highlight the challenges that we are observing in the Peel community.

The PPRC would be happy to arrange a meeting with you and your teams soon so that you can hear directly from our Lived Experience Roundtable members about their experiences and ideas for solutions.

Sincerely,

Peel Poverty Reduction Committee, including
Peel Alliance to End Homelessness (PAEH)
poverty@peelregion.ca

CC:

Peel's MPs

Omar Alghabra Mississauga – Centre
Navdeep Bains Mississauga – Malton
Peter Fonseca Mississauga East –
Cooksville
Maninder Sidhu Brampton – East
Iqra Khalid Mississauga – Erin Mills
Kamal Khera Brampton – West
Ruby Sahota Brampton – North
Ramesh Sangha Brampton – Centre
Sonia Sidhu Brampton – South
Gagan Sikand Mississauga – Streetsville
Sven Spengemann Mississauga –
Lakeshore
Kyle Seeback Dufferin – Caledon

Peel's MPPs

Deepak Anand Mississauga – Malton
Rudy Cuzzetto Mississauga – Lakeshore
Sylvia Jones Dufferin – Caledon
Natalia Kusendova Mississauga – Centre
Kaleed Rasheed Mississauga East – Cooksville
Sheref Sabawy Mississauga – Erin Mills
Amarjot Sandhu Brampton – West
Prabmeet Sarkaria Brampton – South
Sara Singh Brampton – Centre
Gurratan Singh Brampton – East
Nina Tangri Mississauga – Streetsville
Kevin Yarde Brampton – North