



RECEIVED
September 3, 2020
 REGION OF PEEL
 OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL CLERK

September 3, 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

Protecting 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 notwithstanding strong objections from tenants and tenant advocates across the province. 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 tenant duty counsel services) and proceed directly to the Sheriff to change the lock.

The passing of this legislation in combination with the Landlord and Tenant Board having to process 590 eviction applications between March to June, as well as many still pending as far back as January, and the lifting of the suspension of enforcement of residential tenancy evictions last month is expected to add hundreds more, and create a tsunami of displaced families and individuals in the Region of Peel. The Region has limited means to support people who are precariously housed. Those resources include rent geared to housing (Peel has traditionally had the longest waiting list in the province), the shelter system and the Housing Stabilization Fund which provides financial support for tenants to preserve their tenancy. All of these resources were strained prior to the pandemic and are not equipped to address the forthcoming crisis.

It is also important to highlight that this crisis comes in the backdrop of a global pandemic where social distancing and staying home are key strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This Region has consistently been in the top three health units of confirmed cases and the issue of displaced tenants should be of particular concern, especially since this crisis will only start to be felt in the Fall when a second wave of the pandemic is expected to appear.

There have been opinions that municipalities do not have a role to play in housing matters but that simply has not been the case when one considers the municipal role in subsidized housing, zoning, short term rental markets, planning or secondary suites.

REFERRAL TO Human Services
 RECOMMENDED _____
 DIRECTION REQUIRED _____
 RECEIPT RECOMMENDED _____

Municipalities have several tools available to mitigate and contain the crisis.

- 1) The City of Toronto has brought forward a legal challenge to Bill 184 and the Region of Peel can add itself as a party.
- 2) The Region of Peel as the sole shareholder of the Peel Housing Corporation can direct it to refrain from using the new eviction pathway created by Bill 184. Specifically, it can refrain from seeking ex-parte evictions in both directly managed and privately managed buildings.
- 3) The Region of Peel as Service Manager can direct all housing providers to refrain from seeking ex-parte evictions using the new powers granted by Bill 184 for all households receiving RGI.
- 4) The Chief Medical Officer of Health can declare that the tenant crisis is a public health concern and presents a threat to the community.
- 5) A general landlord surcharge to recoup the costs associated with supporting displaced tenants and providing them with housing and homelessness services under the *Municipal Act, 2001* s. 391(1)(b).
- 6) The Region can 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 suggested by the Peel Poverty Reduction Committee in its letter of May 8th, 2020, see attached.

It is imperative that during this pandemic crisis, the Region and lower tier municipalities take a bold stance 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.

Sincerely,

Douglas Kwan, Co-Executive Director, Mississauga Community Legal Services
 Michelle Bilek, Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness
 Norma English, Assistant Executive Director, North Peel Dufferin Community Legal Services
 Elin Goulden, Social Justice & Advocacy Consultant, Anglican Diocese of Toronto



**Awareness. Inclusion.
Access. Opportunity.**

"Access to safe, affordable, and accessible housing; access to affordable and accessible transportation; access to sufficient, affordable, and nutritious food, and access to quality health care and education are basic human rights. We acknowledge that systemic barriers and discrimination can cause marginalized, racialized, immigrant, and newcomer communities to be disproportionately affected by poverty. We must work together as a community to eliminate poverty in Peel."

~ Peel Poverty Reduction
Committee

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

10 Peel Centre Drive,
Suite B
PO Box 2136, STN B
Brampton ON L6T 0E3



**Awareness. Inclusion.
Access. Opportunity.**

"Access to safe, affordable, and accessible housing; access to affordable and accessible transportation; access to sufficient, affordable, and nutritious food, and access to quality health care and education are basic human rights. We acknowledge that systemic barriers and discrimination can cause marginalized, racialized, immigrant, and newcomer communities to be disproportionately affected by poverty. We must work together as a community to eliminate poverty in Peel."

~ Peel Poverty Reduction
Committee

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 Alhabra 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

10 Peel Centre Drive,
Suite B
PO Box 2136, STN B
Brampton ON L6T 0E3