



Wednesday November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019

To Members of the Subcommittee on the Protection of Affordable Rental Housing,

Toronto is in the middle of an affordability crisis, ACORN members have been experiencing this emergency for years. Which is why we've been organizing tenants across the city for over a decade, and fighting against displacement, gentrification and the destruction of affordable housing.

We believe the City of Toronto must create a 'no displacement' strategy to stop renovictions. Greedy landlords and developers need to be stopped, and hardworking tenants need protections from the city. We believe the City should follow in the examples Burnaby & New Westminster who are creating municipal solutions to this problem, without the need for provincial intervention.

Below are Toronto ACORN's recommendations:

- Immediately investigate and implement options that focus on protecting existing affordable housing;
  - Specifically what the cities of Burnaby & New Westminster in British Columbia have done, above and beyond B.C.'s provincial laws
    - <https://www.newwestcity.ca/housing/renovictions-tenant-protection-and-resources>
    - <https://www.burnaby.ca/Assets/city+services/policies+projects+and+initiatives/Final+Report+Mayor%24!27s+Task+Force+on+Community+Housing.PDF>
- Investigate if the RentSafeTO Registry can be expanded to collect the rent paid by tenants, in order to target enforcement on the most affordable housing in the city and protect tenants from displacement due to discrimination, harassment and lack of repairs
- Creation of an affordable housing registry and a landlord registry to track tenants through the renovation/displacement process and ensure they are moved back in upon completion of renovation
- Create an anti-displacement strategy to ensure the city is not uprooting tenants when the focus should be on protecting them, including:
  - A moving allowance of three months rent to cover moving costs, utility hook up fees, etc for displaced tenants

- Provision by the landlord of temporary accommodation for displaced tenants during renovations
  - Rental top up for displaced tenants paid by the landlord, up to 20% above CMHC Average Market Rent, for up to 3 years
  - The creation of an administrative monetary penalty for landlords that violate the right of return for displaced tenants, possibly through the RentSafeTO bylaw
  - Special considerations be used for tenants with disabilities
- The creation of a Rental Housing Coordinator office, exactly like Burnaby is doing, to serve as arbitration between tenants and companies, who would have no profit motive;
  - Keep track of all apartment buildings sold, and immediately inform Toronto tenants of their rights;
  - City staff should make sure building standards are maintained for tenants who continue to live in buildings during renovations, or who resist renovictions;
  - Regulate and publicly register all tenant buyouts;
  - Ensure developers give all displaced tenants suitable housing options;
  - Enforce existing and new regulations on tenant buyouts and tenant relocation through building permit approval processes and all tools/mechanisms available to the City;
    - No permits approved until tenants have access to stable housing, nearby, at the same price they currently pay
  - Create a city-wide inclusionary zoning by-law. All new condo developments need to have 30% affordable rental included.

On Behalf of Toronto ACORN Members,

Marva Burnett, President ACORN Canada