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Planning and Housing Committee
West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

July 13, 2020

Re: PH15.10 City of Toronto Submission on Bill 184 - Protecting Tenants and Strengthening Community Housing Act, 2020

Dear Chair & Committee Members,

City Staff have provided a strong and thorough submission to the Province regarding Bill 184 - *Protecting Tenants and Strengthening Community Housing Act, 2020*. The recommendations to strike the portions of the bill that would make it easier for Landlords to evict tenants and to restrict the use of AGIs, in particular, would provide significant support for Toronto's tenants. However, there are several recommendations not included in Staff's submission that community groups have advocated for. Please consider including the following measures to the City's response to Bill 184:

- **Provide rent forgiveness for vulnerable tenants:** City Council requested the Government of Ontario to provide offset payments to Landlords to forgive rent for tenants that have qualified for federal income supports during the COVID-19 pandemic at its meeting of June 29 & 30 through its adoption of MM 22.20. This request should be included in the City's submission to the province.
- **Ban COVID-19 evictions and eviction notices:** No one should lose their housing due to job loss from the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, while eviction orders have been suspended, landlords are still allowed to file eviction notices and are "entitled to collect compensation from a tenant for each day an eviction order is not enforced," according to the province. If allowed to continue, this measure will leave a threat of eviction over the heads of tenants; exacerbating a public health and financial crisis.
- **Remove consideration of attempted negotiated agreements by the Landlord & Tenant Board in eviction decisions:** In an amendment by the Standing Committee on Social Policy reported to the Legislative Assembly July 6, 2020 additional direction was provided to the Landlord and Tenant Board regarding eviction hearings. Under *Power of Board re eviction Section 83*, the committee added a section stating that when an LTB member is "...determining whether to grant an application to evict a tenant based on arrears in rent arising during the period beginning on March 17, 2020 and ending on the prescribed date, the Board shall consider whether the landlord has attempted to negotiate an agreement with the tenant including terms of payment for the tenant's arrears."

Without further direction, this amendment provides a tacit direction to the LTB to grant evictions if any repayment plan was offered. There have already been reports of Landlords proposing repayment plans that add rent arrears on top of existing monthly rents and that start immediately despite the tenant's job not having returned.

In the absence of stringent reasonability test, developed in consultation with renters and community advocates, the *Power of Board re eviction Section 83* amendment should be removed

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Josh Matlow', written over a horizontal line.

Councillor Josh Matlow
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