

Submitted by
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DEPUTATION

To: Executive Committee, Toronto City Council

DATE: Wednesday, October 26, 2016

RE: Proposed Regulatory and Licensing Strategy for Multi-Tenant Houses and Consultation Plan

EX18.13.7

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

My name is Kira Heineck and I am the Executive Lead with the Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness. Our alliance includes over one hundred members working to end homelessness in our city. We are also the City's community stakeholder group for the Homelessness Partnership Strategy as well as other items as they arise.

Our members represent a broad and diverse network including people with lived experience of homelessness, service delivery agencies, research and policy organizations, consumer driven organizations, businesses, associations, advocacy groups and community organizations.

We applaud the City for beginning to recognize rooming houses – multi-tenant homes -- as a legitimate and valuable housing option.

We believe that you can also recognize and ensure that these homes are a necessary part of Toronto's affordable housing supply, and in turn the City's response to homelessness.

And we cannot stress enough the urgency to do this as quickly as possible.

The majority of single people cannot afford their own apartment at today's rents. The average rent for a bachelor apartment across Greater Toronto is \$1,028 per month. That's fully 50% of the median income for a single person in Toronto. For those on social assistance, it's more than their entire income.

In this environment multi-tenant homes are a critical tool available to ending homelessness. On any given night 500 people are sleeping outside in our city. The financial, health and social costs of this situation are far higher than that of providing enough safe, appropriate and affordable housing for everyone.

You all know this – and demonstrated it clearly (and publically) at last month's housing summit, the highlight of which was our own Mayor leading the Big City Mayors' Caucus in demanding urgent action from our federal government.

We at the TAEH and others in the city were particularly pleased and proud to see ending homelessness as a key principle recommended in the upcoming National Housing Strategy.

We encourage the City, therefore, to be proactive to preserve the multi-tenant homes we have, and expand the stock in all parts of Toronto.