



Deputation to Toronto Executive Committee  
Meeting of Monday, June 19, 2017  
Committee Room #1, City Hall  
Agenda item EX26.2- "Tenants First" Implementation

---

I am here on behalf of the Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario (ACTO) - a community legal clinic, funded by Legal Aid Ontario. We provide a broad range of legal services to low-income tenants across Ontario with an emphasis on systemic issues. We were here a year ago advocating that you support the "Tenants First" report. We asked that you implement the recommendations that would improve the quality of life for the current and future tenants of the housing now owned and managed by TCHC.

We note that a lot of work has gone on since then. We particularly note the amazing work done by the Tenants First Residents Advisory Panel. The last recommendation of the staff report – that Council thank the members of that panel - should be the first thing you do. Our comments on the staff recommendations are guided by the insights offered by the Advisory Panel and we hope that Council agrees with them.

Let's go over what those directions are:

They start with the principle that that housing is a right for everyone;

They support a dedicated seniors' housing provider;

They do not support the closing of any social housing units in view of current RGI waiting list;

They seek energy-efficiency initiatives for cost savings;

They point out that the city must build more affordable housing;

They remind us that single family homes are an important part of the RGI housing stock;

They seek equitable delivery of programs and services to all communities so they are available to ALL tenants; and

They demand an inclusive and safe platform arising from tenant engagement and community development; from there, they want to develop meaningful leadership roles for tenants and meaningful input into housing policy.

Do not continue to underestimate the people of Toronto. The people of this City believe in equity and in giving a helping hand to those in need. Do something that addresses the sobering conclusions in PWC's financial analysis. By all means, adopt the recommendations in the staff report. But attach some real, immediate money to those recommendations so they have some meaning. Show the TCHC tenants, the wider community and the senior levels of government that you are willing to stand up and take responsibility. If you fail to do that, you will be putting the long-term success of Toronto at risk.

**Kenneth Hale, Director of Advocacy and Legal Services**