

From: [Yogi Acharya](#)
To: [Executive Committee](#)
Subject: Deputation: Item 26.3, Exec Committee Meeting - June 19
Date: Monday, June 19, 2017 8:18:26 AM

Dear Jennifer,

Please find below a written submission that speaks to item 26.3 at today's Executive Committee meeting.

Thanks,
Yogi

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Dear Executive Committee Members,

I am submitting this written deputation on behalf of the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, a poor people's organization mobilizing for housing and income adequacy for the past 27 years. This submission is cautiously optimistic about the proposed regulations for short-term rentals to be discussed by the Executive Committee (item EX26.3) and draws attention to the need to preserve rooming house stock.

As an organization we are in favour of the recommendations set out in *Squeezed Out: Airbnb's Commercialization of Home-Sharing in Toronto*, the report produced by the Fairbnb coalition, as they offer concrete ways to curb the negative influence of businesses like Airbnb on housing affordability. Such businesses increase incentives for landlords to evict poor and low-income tenants and convert previously affordable housing units into de-facto hotels. A good example of this is the conversion of the licensed rooming house at 180 Sherbourne Street to a boutique Airbnb hotel. The fact that such developments disproportionately and substantially impact poor neighbourhoods in the downtown core and poor tenants across the city is clear.

The regulations proposed by the city are a good first step towards dealing with businesses that rob the city of tax revenues and its residents of affordable housing options. The cautiousness we express results from three factors: the long period of 'consultations' on regulations that have documented results in other municipalities, the lack of a plan to stem the loss of rooming houses in the interim and incentivize their expansion, and the historical support for gentrifying and developer friendly "revitalization" projects among members of the city council.

OCAP remains deeply concerned about the state of housing in Toronto. The unrelenting upswing in the numbers of the homeless over the last five years is a clear indication of the crisis of affordable housing. With housing ownership beyond the realm of consideration, middle-to-low income residents are also being robbed of decent rental options. Soaring market rents and subsidized housing waiting lists, fuelled by critically low vacancy rates and

the shameful destruction of the public housing are relegating increasing numbers of people to the streets, with many simply being a few missed pay-cheques away from the meeting the same fate.

The situation demands urgent action by the Mayor's Executive Committee and City Council, the increasing numbers of people left homeless do not have endless amounts of time. This fact should be clear given the appalling statistics on homeless deaths the City's Public Health department has released.

sincerely,

Yogi Acharya

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