

**Friday, July 24, 2020**

The Executive Committee  
University of Toronto Students' Union  
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**RE: Item PH15.10**

Dear members of the Toronto City Council,

As the Executive Committee of the University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU), representing over 38,000 full-time undergraduate students at the University of Toronto - St. George campus, we are writing to you today in support of Item PH15.10. The *Protecting Tenants and Strengthening Community Housing Act*, more commonly referred to as Bill 184, threatens the housing security of tenants across the city who have been impacted by COVID-19 and are behind on their rent. Students in particular are in a precarious situation, as many have lost their jobs or are working reduced hours, have had their housing or roommate situation change unexpectedly, and are now on the hook for rent they are unable to pay.

Bill 184 would allow for landlords to bypass the Landlord & Tenant Board by proposing their own rent repayment plans. A tenant's refusal of a rent repayment plan would be considered grounds for eviction before the Landlord & Tenant Board, and tenants can be evicted without a hearing if they fail to fulfill the repayment plan in its entirety. This allows landlords to propose unreasonable repayment plans that tenants cannot afford to agree to, and then move swiftly to eviction once a payment is short, late, or the repayment plan is refused. Bill 184 assumes that landlords are understanding and have the best interests of their tenants in mind, however the reality is that landlords frequently take advantage of tenants in the interest of profit or convenience. This is often the case for student tenants, who on average have less income and less knowledge of housing law and their rights as tenants.

Item PH15.10 would call on the Province of Ontario to provide support for these at-risk tenants, through investments in housing support services, emergency shelters, and the development of affordable rental housing. We also support the Planning and Housing Committee's direction to the City Solicitor to report to City Council on the possibility of legally challenging provisions in Bill 184 that circumvent the normal hearing processes before the Landlord & Tenant Board.

In a crisis as devastating as the COVID-19 pandemic, tenants need support, not the threat of eviction. The UTSU fully supports the Planning & Housing Committee's recommendations laid out in PH15.10, and urges City Council to adopt them.

Yours,

The UTSU Executive | [executives@utsu.ca](mailto:executives@utsu.ca) | 416-978-4911