



September 24, 2021

Toronto City Council
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
By email: councilmeeting@toronto.ca

Re: Planning and Housing Committee Item PH25.10 – Multi-Tenant Housing

Dear Mayor Tory and Members of Council:

Collectively, we represent institutions with student enrollments that exceed 300,000 people. We are writing to express support for staff recommendations to implement a city-wide licensing, zoning, and expanded enforcement regime for multi-tenant houses.

The housing crisis in the City of Toronto affects renters, buyers, and many different communities across the City yet students are particularly vulnerable. They often find themselves renting accommodations in multi-tenant housing or “rooming houses” which remain one of the most affordable housing options the City has to offer.

In parts of the City these dwellings remain illegal yet many individuals continue to opt for multi-tenant houses primarily due to their affordability. Implementing a city-wide regulatory framework and enforcement regime that protects tenants in these arrangements is critical to ensuring vulnerable people are afforded the same rights as other renters.

We also note that neighbourhood organizations play a critical role in reporting unsafe conditions and an enhanced enforcement regime ought to provide faster response times to ensure the safety of residents and neighbourhoods. Deeming these options illegal simply does not work for residents or communities and continues to put lives at risk.

For our part, postsecondary education institutions continue to build and maintain student housing though the current municipal planning process sometimes works to delay and restrict the number of units that can be constructed. Additionally, universities and colleges are not provided funding through Provincial or federal governments to enhance supply, further constricting the role we can play.

Regardless of the supply of on-campus housing, many students choose to live off-campus and providing safe and affordable options is critical. We collectively feel the staff recommendations currently before Council would work to significantly enhance safety and affordability across the City, and we request that the City implement these recommendations.

Sincerely,



Craig Stephenson
President and CEO
Centennial College



Gervan Fearon
President
George Brown College



Chris Whitaker
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