



City Councillor  
**Dianne Saxe**  
Ward 11, University-Rosedale

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January 15, 2024

**Fraternities should not be exempt from the Multi-Tenant Housing Bylaw**

To: Clerk and Members of Planning and Housing Committee  
City Hall,  
100 Queen St W  
Toronto ON M5H 2N2

Dear Clerk and Members,

Ward 11 contains a number of fraternity and sorority residences that provide accommodation for four or more students. In exchange for payment, students occupy dwelling rooms that are comparable to the dwelling rooms that will be regulated under the Multi-tenant House Licensing By-law when it comes into force in April 2024. At present, fraternities and sororities are not required to hold a city licence in order to provide such accommodation.

The Multi-tenant House Licensing By-law is intended to ensure that those who pay to occupy dwelling rooms have a safe, adequate and dignified place to live, that the facility is known to comply with applicable laws, and that an owner and person in charge are clearly identified and accountable for its legal compliance.

In 2018 staff delivered a report, *Fraternity and Sorority Houses Exemption to Chapter 285, Rooming Houses* and through that report, were directed by council to identify licensing requirements for fraternity and sorority housing (see adopted recommendation number three, <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2018.LS25.2>). After that review, staff recommended that MTH licensing requirements should apply to fraternity and sorority residences.

Almost all of Toronto's fraternity and sorority residences are located in Ward 11. In December 2022, when Council considered the Multi-tenant House Licensing By-law on short notice, staff proposed that the bylaw should apply to fraternity and sorority housing. However, the Ward Councillor had not had an opportunity to consult with her constituents, to meet with the sororities and fraternities, or to investigate whether this proposal was necessary to protect the interests of the students and of their neighbours. Accordingly, this provision was deleted from the MTH bylaw before approval.

In the 13 months since that time, the Ward Councillor has consulted with her constituents and with representatives of sororities and fraternities. Residents advise that the fraternities and sororities in Ward 11 continue to have a pattern of conflicts with their neighbours and limited compliance with city bylaws. The mere fact that fraternities and sororities were not previously regulated does not

immunize them from becoming regulated now. Nor have we seen any evidence that regulation under the Multi-tenant House Licensing By-law would prevent fraternities and sororities from providing affordable student housing in Ward 11. The requirements of the Multi-tenant House Licensing By-law are modest and reasonable. Those who live in dwelling rooms in fraternities or sororities deserve the same legal protections as those who live in other dwelling rooms.

Now that MLS has spent more than a year preparing for detailed implementation of the Multi-tenant House Licensing By-law, and that two MTH-related reports will be before the Planning and Housing Committee in February 2024, it is appropriate for Council to revisit staff's original recommendation to protect students and their neighbours by regulating fraternity and sorority residences under the Multi-tenant House Licensing By-law.

In addition, MLS will be bringing a report to Planning and Housing Committee and City Council in 2025 after the first year of operating under the new MTH bylaw. In that report, staff should review whether a related form of housing should also be regulated by the MTH bylaw: co-operative student residences owned or leased by a non-profit, nonshare corporation that provide housing accommodation on a cooperative basis. No reason for the continued exemption of these residences has yet been provided.

**Recommendations:**

1. That Council direct the Executive Director of Municipal Licencing and Standards to report to the February 2024 meeting of the Planning and Housing Committee with their advice on whether to apply the Multi-tenant House Licensing By-law to fraternity and sorority student residences.
2. That City Council direct the Executive Director of Municipal Licencing and Standards to report to the the Planning and Housing Committee, as part of their report on the year-one implementation of the Multi-tenant House Licensing By-law, planned for Q2 2025, on whether it is appropriate to apply the Multi-tenant House Licensing By-law to co-operative student residences owned or leased by a non-profit, nonshare corporation and providing housing accommodation on a cooperative basis.