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March 25, 2025

Dear Mayor Olivia Chow and City Council

**Re: Urgent Request: to Adopt Ombudsperson's Recommendations
on Refugee Shelter Access**

I am writing to you as a citizen who is deeply troubled by the City of Toronto's failure to fully adopt the recommendations outlined in Ombudsperson Kwame Addo's report, "*An Investigation into the City's Decision to Stop Allowing Refugee Claimants into Base Shelter System Beds.*"

Despite the Ombudsperson's clear findings — including acknowledgment of systemic anti-Black racism in the City's decision-making process — **Item 2025.CC28.2** only asks City Council to "consider" the report and related communications.

🔗 City Council Agenda – Item 2025.CC28.2: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.CC28.2>

This lack of formal adoption undermines public accountability and reinforces patterns of exclusion and harm, particularly for Black and racialized refugee claimants who have been disproportionately impacted by this decision.

I respectfully call on you, as Mayor of Toronto, to:

- **Direct the City Manager** to fully adopt and implement all of the Ombudsperson's recommendations, including: Transparent and equitable decision-making regarding shelter access;
- Meaningful consultation with impacted communities and service providers;
- A comprehensive policy review to eliminate exclusionary practices; and
- Upholding Toronto's stated commitment to human rights.

Ensure that the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee (CABRAC) plays an integral role in overseeing this process and advising City Council on next steps.

Honor your public commitment to meet with impacted communities — a commitment made following the press conference held by the African Canadian Collective and the Crisis in Our City Network in 2024. It is disheartening that such a meeting has yet to take place.

We stand in solidarity with refugee-serving organizations and equity advocates who have raised these concerns and urge you to lead by example in restoring public confidence and advancing justice.

This is not only a matter of policy — it is a test of our city's values.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Walsh".

David Walsh

President, Community Counts Foundation

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Ward 13 – City of Toronto