



July 22, 2025

**SENT VIA EMAIL**

To: Toronto City Council Members

**RE: MM32.23 - Taking Action to Protect Tenants**

We are writing today to voice our strong support for Councillor Matlow's motion that would establish a colour-coded rating system with visible signage for rental units through RentSafeTO, similar to the City's successful DineSafe program. This proposal supports improved transparency for existing and prospective tenants, improved accountability for the City's Municipal Licensing & Standards (MLS) division, and enhances consumer protection and oversight in the rental market across Toronto. While we strongly believe there is much more that can be done to improve conditions for tenants across Toronto, we welcome this motion as a key next step.

We'd like to dispel a popular myth put forward by opponents of this proposal— particularly landlord lobbyist groups: Colour-coded RentSafe signs will not “stigmatize tenants” as some claim. Tenants understand that it's landlords, not tenants, who are responsible for poor housing conditions that are reflected in building ratings and would be highlighted by RentSafe signage – ***that responsibility lies with the landlord***. Signage is a tool that increases transparency for tenants. If landlords enthusiastically use tools such as OpenRoom to “increase transparency” in whom they choose to rent to, but then turn around and lobby against transparency measures that would benefit tenants, then the conclusion is clear: they do not care about transparency in the rental market if it does not benefit them.

This is symptomatic of a much bigger problem across Toronto. Landlords and landlord lobbyist groups market themselves as “housing providers”, altruistically delivering a much-needed resource to half of the City's population. But being a landlord is a business – a profitable one, which becomes even more profitable when landlords shirk their legal requirements under RentSafeTO to deliver safe, sanitary housing. That's the real reason landlord lobbyist groups are opposed to this measure and continue to direct resources opposing measures that would improve housing conditions for tenants: improving housing conditions for tenants means reducing bad landlords' profits. In reviewing the Annual Report for the Toronto Lobbyist Registrar currently before Council ([CC 32.2](#)), we ask Councillors to reflect on the sheer volume of lobbying efforts directed at Planning & Housing topics— 39% of all lobbying topics in 2024, according to the Registrar's report. The Greater Toronto Apartment Association (GTAA) and Federation of Rental Providers of Ontario (FRPO) both register lobbyists regarding the

City's rental housing policies, and these lobbying efforts aren't directed towards ensuring landlords become better "housing providers"; they're directed towards stopping measures like this that aim to improve housing conditions for tenants, while potentially reducing landlord profits.

Less transparency and accountability is not the answer to poor rental housing conditions. In addition to the RentSafe sign program, we strongly encourage City Council to adopt the complementary measures proposed by ACORN that would increase safety and consumer protections through RentSafe. These include:

- Standard compliance with transparent timelines for remedial action, fines, penalties, tickets, and Orders to Comply with MLS;
- Expanded randomized audits to 10% of eligible rental properties across Toronto to ensure more robust data;
- Standard work order forms that are available both on-line and in hard copy to better serve tenants' accessibility needs; and
- RentSafe scores that reflect repeat violations.

We further urge Council to realize the Mayor's commitment to establish a Renter's Action Committee that would enable tenants across Toronto to have a voice at City Hall in decision-making that affects them. Unlike the aforementioned landlord lobbyists, tenants have fewer financial and time resources to participate and have their voices included in critical decisions, despite comprising half of the city's population. To date, very little progress has been made in establishing this Committee and tenants continue to be largely shut out of decision-making processes that impact them. Meaningful action on this matter is needed from City Council members and Mayor Olivia Chow.

Many thanks,  
The No Demovictions Team