



May 11, 2026

Executive Committee
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen St W
Toronto ON M5H 2N2

RE: Item 2026.EX31.2 - Standardizing the Air Conditioner Benefit (Pilot)

Dear Members of the Executive Committee,

We are writing on behalf of the Toronto Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) regarding Item 2026.EX31.2. Toronto ACORN is a part of ACORN Canada, a mass membership organization structured like a union for the community, with over 190,000 low and moderate income members fighting for social and economic justice nationwide. Across the city, we have neighbourhood ACORN chapters organizing in Rexdale, York West, Weston, Downtown Toronto, East York, and Scarborough.

Extreme heat is becoming a deadlier issue for Torontonians with each passing year. Toronto ACORN's 2026 State of Repair Report found that 60.5% of tenants reported experiencing extreme heat in the last 12 months, compared to 27.6% in 2020. Low and moderate income people are among the most affected: tenants living without air conditioning are at higher risk of experiencing heat-related health problems. Other factors, like age, gender, disability, and health status increase these risks even further. This problem is only getting worse, and we need our governments to act accordingly.

We are happy to see an additional \$1 million being allocated to the Free Air Conditioner Program. During the 2026 City Budget deliberations, Toronto ACORN pushed for enough funding for 2500 air conditioners to be provided before summer 2026. The additional funding being allocated to the Program from the Corporate Extreme Weather Reserve will nearly meet this request, with the accompanying City staff reporting stating that up



to 2400 air conditioners will be supplied and installed during the summer 2026. This is a direct health intervention that will save peoples' lives this summer.

We're also pleased to hear that City staff are working to harmonize the various social programs that offering air conditioner benefits to ensure a simple and easy-to-navigate experience for applicants.

However, air conditioners and cooling rooms are only short-term solutions and do not address the root of the problem. What tenants need is a maximum indoor temperature bylaw that caps indoor temperatures in all rental units at 26°C year-round.

We continue to urge the City to present a draft maximum indoor temperature bylaw as soon as possible, and we welcome any opportunity to provide feedback to that end.

Sincerely yours,

The Toronto ACORN Board

Marva Burnett

Chair, Scarborough ACORN

Alejandra Ruiz Vargas

Chair, East York ACORN

Stacey Semple

Chair, Downtown Toronto ACORN

Marcia Stone

Chair, Weston ACORN

Edina Edmunds

Chair, York West ACORN

Toronto Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN)

For more details, please contact the Toronto ACORN office:

Ty Riches, Lead Organizer – (416) 461-9233 | toacorn@acorncanada.org