

July 14, 2026

Planning & Housing Committee

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

Re: PH32.19 – Protecting Tenants from Fraudulent Evictions

The Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario (ACTO) expresses our support for the above-mentioned motion introduced by Councillor Josh Matlow. ACTO is a community legal clinic funded by Legal Aid Ontario dedicated to advancing tenant rights across the province. Central to our mission is the recognition of the right to housing for tenants.

The motion, which is scheduled to be heard on July 16, 2026, requests that the City Manager and Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards report on the feasibility of increasing the authority and jurisdiction of RentSafe Officers to identify potential fraud within the residential housing sector and compile evidence to assist in any criminal investigation by the Toronto Police Services of the alleged activity. In addition, the motion requests that authority be extended to identify and investigate potential breaches of the *Residential Tenancies Act* (“RTA”).

It is our position that this initiative could address systemic breaches of the RTA by landlords who, by intent or willful negligence, consistently inflict harm on multiple tenant households. RentSafe ensures that Toronto’s residents live in a properly maintained building. By law enforcement officers identify which buildings are performing well, which buildings require some remedial work, which buildings require significant work and which buildings consistently ignore orders and pose a health and safety threat to the residents living in them. For example, at 500 Dawes, the information that they collected was instrumental in issuing fines and eventually obtaining an order for incarceration against one of [Toronto’s most notorious bad landlords](#). The unfortunate part is that it took over [15 years of](#) complaints from people with lived experience, tenant advocates, multiple work orders, and litigation to finally achieve this result. During those years, residents felt powerless to protect themselves and frustrated at having to return to the Landlord and Tenant Board (“LTB”), yet again.

Landlord and Tenant Board

The LTB is one forum where tenants can find justice. However, tenants are often unable to effectively participate in proceedings because of disability, language digital barriers and other characteristics or too intimidated by the process. It is well reported

that the LTB has not been able to appropriately adjudicate matters when breaches of the legislation occur, whether because of notoriously [long delays](#) (multiple months to defend against eviction applications) or scheduling policies that [favour](#)s applications from landlords over tenants. Furthermore, when the breaches are so egregious that administrative fines are warranted, the LTB [rarely](#) issues fines that are responsive to the gravity of the breach or sufficient to deter against subsequent breaches.

Moreover, many tenants and advocates express frustrations over a perceived bias towards landlords at the LTB. With provincial changes to the legislation since 2018 that included [Bill 184](#) and [Bill 60](#), the tenant protection focus of the legislation has been whittled away to a point where many people no longer have confidence in the LTB to address systemic breaches of the legislation.

Residential Housing and Enforcement Unit (RHEU)

The RHEU is a unit that investigates offences and prosecutes them under the RTA. It is a unit under the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing that has the potential to address systemic bad actors who breach the legislation. However, the unit [does not](#) have a strong mandate to address systemic issues nor the resources to do so. For example, this unit only has 18 staff, and only three investigators, responsible for addressing serious breaches of the Act among the 1.7 million Ontario renter households.

RentSafe Officers can play a pivotal role in collecting information of systemic and serious breaches of maintenance standards and provide information to the relevant enforcement authorities to support the successful prosecution of landlords who do not follow the law. The right policy must also establish safeguards to ensure that Officers respect the privacy and Charter Rights of tenants and do not use their expanded authority as a premise to investigate non-housing related criminal offences. It is our hope that with the right policy in place, Torontonians will no longer have to bear the constant torment exemplified by the conditions at 500 Dawes.

Sincerely,

Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario

per:



Douglas Kwan
Director of Advocacy and Legal Services