

## We are in a crisis!

- ◆ Since 1995 the Ontario government has cut nearly \$880 million from provincial housing programs. This means that in Ontario we have lost 82,900 affordable social housing units – enough housing for 224,000 people.
- ◆ Toronto's social housing waiting list is at an all-time record of 68,000 households — a family that applies today will have to wait 17 years to get a home.
- ◆ Since 1995 rents have increased as much as 30% in some parts of Toronto.
- ◆ A single person on social assistance lives on \$520 a month – the average rent for a one bedroom in Toronto is \$891.
- ◆ A single parent with two children working 35 hours a week for minimum wage (\$6.85) makes \$1030/month before taxes. Monthly rent for an average two bedroom apartment in Toronto is \$1047.
- ◆ 60,000 tenants are evicted every year in Ontario. 80% of those are for arrears of less than one month's rent.
- ◆ Even the Toronto City Summit Alliance, the TD Bank, and other business groups say that senior levels of government should reinvest in housing programs:

**“Homelessness is a Toronto crisis that requires the attention of every level of government...”**

- Toronto Board of Trade

## What can we do?

### TAKE ACTION!

- ◆ **Talk** about housing in the upcoming elections.
- ◆ **Ask** people who want your vote what they will do about housing.
- ◆ **Know** your voting rights!  
**Elections Ontario**  
1-800-667-8683  
[www.electionsontario.on.ca](http://www.electionsontario.on.ca)
- ◆ **Attend** local housing events.
- ◆ **Write** letters to the Editor about the need for housing.
- ◆ **Organize** community meetings about the need for housing.
- ◆ **Support** initiatives to open unused buildings for housing.
- ◆ **Volunteer** to translate and distribute this pamphlet.
- ◆ **Work with HOME** – Housing Ontario Means Everyone – to make sure housing is a priority.



# HOME

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**HOME** is a new Toronto-based coalition of community groups, tenant organizations and organizations working with homeless people and people with housing problems. We want to raise awareness of housing and homelessness issues in the months ahead.

# H O U S I N G O N T A R I O M E A N S E V E R Y O N E

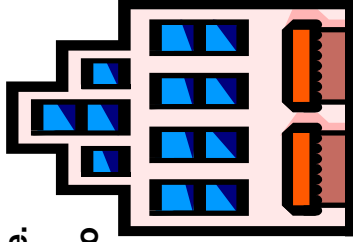


# PEOPLE IN ONTARIO NEED AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

# THERE ARE SOLUTIONS.

## Build Affordable Housing

- ◆ We need money and land from the Ontario Government for 20,000 new rental units of affordable housing per year. Affordable means that we don't have to spend more than 30% of our incomes on rent.
- ◆ We need rent supplements for co-op and non-profit units.
- ◆ We need to keep the social housing that we already have.
- ◆ We need new laws to stop affordable rental housing from being turned into condos.
- ◆ We need housing for everyone.



Two-thirds of renter households cannot afford current average market rents. This means that people have to double up or couch surf or put up with substandard housing. People who have trouble paying their rent are getting evicted. The solution is simple: **Build affordable housing.**

## Change the Law

Scrap the Tenant Protection Act and Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal and put in place laws that:

- ◆ Stop the flood of evictions.
- ◆ Put an immediate freeze on rents.
- ◆ Bring back rent controls.
- ◆ Ensure legal representation and fair hearings for tenants.

Since the Tenant Protection Act and the elimination of rent controls became law, the number of evictions has skyrocketed. Most of these evictions have happened because tenants are behind less than one month's rent.

Many tenants can no longer afford their rents because landlords can now charge what they want when a new tenant moves in. Many tenants get evicted without knowing all of their rights and there is little legal help available.

Changing tenant laws to make them clear and fair will help tenants defend themselves. Returning rent control will help tenants avoid eviction in the first place.

## Increase Incomes

- ◆ Increase the shelter portion of social assistance and ODSP to reflect average market rents.
- ◆ Restore the 21.6% cut to social assistance and adjust the rates to the cost of living.
- ◆ A \$10 minimum wage.
- ◆ Stable long term jobs that pay well.
- ◆ Publicly funded child care.



Falling income has made the cost of food and shelter unaffordable.

A greater focus on jobs that are long term and well paying is needed to stop the general economic decline.

Sufficient low-cost, licensed child care is essential so that people can work.

Social assistance and minimum wage should be increased to reflect a liveable income level. These rates have been cut or frozen for 8 to 10 years.

**Take the first steps to build housing in Ontario for everyone.**