



ESCR

Emergency
Support
Committee for
Refugees



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November 26, 2020

Fred Eisenberger,
Mayor,
City of Hamilton,

Re: Action on Housing Now-Defund the Police

The Emergency Support Committee for Refugees (ESCR) is a Hamilton-based registered charity that provides emergency loans and gifts to at-risk immigrants, refugees and other migrants. We have worked in partnership with settlement, health, educational and community organizations to successfully support migrants and refugees through research, monetary support and Advocacy in the City of Hamilton since 1987.

We unequivocally support the Defund the Police movement's recommendation to immediately reallocate municipal funds to address the concurrent **homelessness crisis** and the **COVID-19 pandemic**. In particular, we acknowledge that the organizers, Black and racialized people, have important insights and solutions which need to be heard. Our care for all who call Hamilton home underpins our work to ensure that municipal services be provided free and without discrimination to all in the City of Hamilton through Sanctuary City.

We raise our voice in solidarity with the Defund organizers' peaceful protest, and echo their call for the redistribution of municipal revenues & available relief funds to immediately prioritize actions that will solve the housing crisis now. This includes investments in the root causes of homelessness, such as coordinated social programs, supportive services, and targeted housing for people made more vulnerable by a pandemic that has disproportionately affected racialized & newcomer populations.

In our organization's three decades of supporting migrants and refugees in Hamilton, we know that safety and security are defined by the measure of wellbeing enjoyed by our society's most vulnerable.

In an historic moment where many lives hang in the balance, we ask that you take extraordinary measures to act for housing now.

Sincerely,

Nora Melara-Lopez
Jennifer Hompoth

Maria Antelo
Mary Anne Peters

Raghad Abdel-Latif
Alex Matheson

Board of Directors, Emergency Support Committee for Refugees

Cc: Members of the Council, City of Hamilton