

Hello City Councillors and City Staff,

My name is Linda Boos and I am a member of ACORN's downtown chapter and a tenant in Ward 13.

I am writing to call on the Planning Committee to implement a strong Rental Housing Protection Bylaw that protects tenants against demoviction!

Our rental units are our HOMES. Home is our shelter against the world - the place we feel safe, loved and protected.

Renters today live with the uncertainty of what will become of their home. Demoviction is a practice that disrupts families and tenant communities. During these demolition evictions, people are victimized through their displacement. What will happen to them? Where will they live? Is it going to be safe?

It is critical that Tenants are provided protections at this time when housing has become a commodity for roving investors and developers to make money. Tenants are looking to their city councillors to stand strong for them today because for the past thirty years, their government has let affordable housing decay into its current skeletal state.

My apartment building at 211 York Road felt like my home until it was purchased 2 years ago by an investor group. Some tenants, including myself, experienced anxiety after these new owners renovicted all of the seniors who lived in the retirement home on the first floor. Some of those seniors had been in that building for decades, before they were given notice and scattered to the wind without a second thought. It was just awful. The rest of us lived with the fear that a similar fate would fall on us. We lived with that anxiety for two years before the investor group decided to sell the building. Before long more private investors were hovering and anxiety was at an all time high.

Tenants knew that they needed to try to push back and in March, created a Tenant Association. We let the public know what had happened at our building via the media. Three weeks ago, a not-for-profit group that learned about our situation, ended up purchasing our building. We are very fortunate because we can stop living in fear of eviction. But this is a rare event in this brutal atmosphere of greed and evictions.

The right to adequate housing is a human right for everyone in Canada. The financialization of housing has exacerbated the lack of affordable and adequate housing everywhere, including Hamilton. The result is evictions that leave the most disadvantaged at risk of human rights violations.

Please help protect tenants.

Thank you for your time,

Linda Boos