

**From:** Emily Goodman [REDACTED]  
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**To:** [clerk@hamilton.ca](mailto:clerk@hamilton.ca)  
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Hello,

I am writing to have my statement given during the general issues committee meeting on Jan 20th. I unfortunately am not able to attend but would like my statement to be read in front of the committee.

My statement is as follows:

Greetings to the committee. My name is Emily, and I am a resident of Ward 7. I am writing to speak with you all concerning the property tax increase that has been announced for this year. I don't think that it should come as a surprise that myself, and other members of the community that I have spoken with, take issue with an increase of this size (6.3%). The issue is two-fold:

1. Hamiltonians are facing an affordability crisis, as are many Canadians. With many Hamiltonians living below the poverty line, and one in four families living on less than \$40,000 per year, many families are scrimping, saving and cutting back to make ends meet. Food bank use is at a record high. With the ever-increasing cost of living and inflation, every increase matters. Increasing property taxes above the rate of inflation, which is projected to be less than 2% in 2025, feels unfair. I work as a public employee, where cost of the living wage adjustments usually amount to less than what inflation is calculated to be. I know that an increase of this size, year over year, will prove to be challenging for many families and seniors in Hamilton - especially when compounded by inflation in other essential goods and services.
2. There are concerns with the city's ability at properly managing funds. Crime and homelessness are both on the rise despite the increase in property taxes of 5.8% last year. People do not feel safe to use the parks that their taxes are funding. People are smoking/injecting drugs out in the open. Parks are left covered with filth, feces, drugs and general waste. Encampment fires have become a common occurrence, which puts the safety of the homes within proximity in jeopardy. Car theft is up. People are having their Christmas decorations and patio furniture stolen off their lawns and porches regularly. Hamilton has some of the worst streets in Ontario, as evidenced by appearing twice on CAA's Worst Roads in Ontario "Winners". When parks and services are in such a state, it makes people skeptical of how funds are being appropriated, especially when people are having a hard time financially.

I have hope in what Hamilton can be. If I didn't, I wouldn't have moved here 10 years ago and bought a house here in the past year. I came to Hamilton from Kitchener as a McMaster student and now work serving my community as a nurse at the bedside. I had no intention to stay but grew to find myself at home in Hamilton. Despite Hamilton's flaws, I enjoy living here and am glad to have purchased a home here. I love the diversity in the community, the festivals and exhibits, the nature, the vibe - Hamilton has a lot to offer. As a young woman looking to start a family, I want the very best for Hamilton. I want all members of the community, including my future children, to be able to use our public parks. I want to live in a city where there is a code of conduct that is abided by, and where unlawful activity is prosecuted. I want to live in a city where people get the help that they need and are not left to freeze in tents in the park. I feel like people wouldn't object so much to the property tax increases if they didn't feel like they were living in a city in decline.

I hope that the funds that are being collected through our property taxes go towards meaningful changes to our city's problems.

Thank you for your time.