

Dear Tenants,

I've heard from many of you that being a renter in Toronto is becoming increasingly difficult and it feels like your budget is being squeezed tighter every month. While we appreciate that guideline rent increases have been capped, Above the Guideline Increases (AGIs) for basic upkeep and repairs have pushed rents that were already steep into the unaffordable range. In addition, the low vacancy rate has made it nearly impossible to find lower-cost alternatives elsewhere. No Torontonian should be forced to choose between paying rent and buying groceries, but that's the unfortunate choice too many of us are facing.

It's time for real action to protect tenants!

Sincerely,

Josh Matlow



Councillor Josh Matlow
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Stop Unfair Rent Hikes

An AGI is a rent increase above the "Guideline" increase that a landlord can apply for through the Landlord and Tenant Board to cover the cost of capital repairs such as replacing elevators or balconies. As a result of this provincial law, tenants are being unfairly burdened for the landlord's cost of doing business. Landlords already receive guideline increases and further rent hikes from vacancy decontrol to deal with their costs. Repairs should be included as part of a landlord's overall expenses and paid for from the significant rent they already receive.

Landlords should be required to maintain the building and pay for maintenance as needed, not be given incentive to let their buildings deteriorate and then place huge bills on the backs of tenants. They should be mandated to save 20% of rental income for a maintenance account that they can then access for capital expenditures instead of getting tenants to fund the projects. A similar requirement is already in place for condominiums.

"My rent will go up by \$60 every month this year. And what about next year? When will it stop or be reduced? We get the feeling that they want us out so they can renovate more of the units and rent them at higher prices."

- tenant, 44 Jackes Avenue

"We recently received an above-guideline rent increase. I now spend nearly half of my take-home pay on rent, making it difficult to make my other payments, much less save for the future."

- tenant, 141 Davisville Avenue

Stop Spiralling Rents in Newer Buildings

Property owners of older buildings are bound by the Guideline rent increase when setting their cost to tenants. However, renters in apartments built after November 1, 1991 have no such protection. Landlords of these newer apartments are free to raise rents as much as they want with minimal notice.

Most new buildings constructed in Toronto over the past decade have been condominiums, yet many are being rented out and that trend is increasing. There were 31 per cent more condo units rented in the first quarter of 2013 than in 2012. Rents in these units increased 4.4% during the same period.

Toronto's population is expected to grow by 160,000 over the next 10 years with just as many new condo or apartment units added. The provincial government needs to end the exemption for buildings constructed after 1991 to protect current and future tenants from spiralling rents.



Take Action!

Is your rent too high?

Are you afraid you will no longer be able to afford your apartment?

Looking for an apartment and unable to find a home that you can afford?

You are not alone. Average rents have risen \$80 per month for a one bedroom in just the last four years – higher in the old City of Toronto. That's almost \$1000 a year extra at a time when wages have stagnated. Please write to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and your Member of Provincial Parliament. Tell them:

- Many upgrades and repairs landlords want to do should be the regular “price of doing business” and should not be forced onto tenants to pay for. Landlords should be required to pay for maintenance as needed through the high rents they already receive.
- Please get rid of unfair Above the Guideline Rent increases
- End the exemption from rent control for apartments built or first occupied after 1991

Contact Info

Please copy my office at councillor_matlow@toronto.ca so that we can keep track of the numbers of emails sent.

You can visit my website to learn more and for assistance contacting your local Member of Provincial Parliament: www.joshmatlow.ca/AGI

The Honourable Linda Jeffrey
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
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minister.mah@ontario.ca

Tenant Hotline

If you are facing an AGI or have any questions about your rights as a tenant in Toronto, please contact the Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations (FMTA) by calling the Tenant Hotline at 416 921 9494 or visit torontotenants.ca.

The FMTA is a free service that can help the tenants in your building organize to fight an AGI. It can also direct you to community or city agencies, legal clinics, and other necessary resources.



Is Your Rent out of Control?

Stop Unfair Rent Increases Now!

This campaign for AGI reform is jointly supported by the Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations and Toronto City Councillor Josh Matlow (Ward 22 – St Paul's).