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Hon. Steve Clark
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
College Park 17th Flr, 777 Bay St,
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
7th Flr, 438 University Ave,
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

Hon. Christine Elliott
Ministry of Health
College Park 5th Flr, 777 Bay St,
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Hon. Doug Ford
Office of the Premier
Legislative Bldg Rm 281, Queen's Park,
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

May 2, 2022

Dear Hon. Steve Clark, Hon. Merrilee Fullerton, Hon. Christine Elliott and Hon. Doug Ford,

I write today to convey the story of my constituent Denise¹, who is in desperate need of subsidized housing.

Denise is a wheelchair user and suffers from a spinal cord injury, among several other complex chronic medical conditions. One of them is Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS), which has caused symptoms such as sinus irritation, chest pain, difficulty breathing, rashes, vomiting, increase in hemiplegic migraines and confusion. According to her doctor, Dr. Riina Bray, such symptoms are exacerbated by constant chemical exposures, which are present at her current home, and “the effects of the air in and around her apartment pose a potential life-threatening risk.” Denise has expressed that she has to sit outside in the cold for hours in her wheelchair to escape these triggers in her apartment, and, while inside, she often has to use a respirator or wear a medical mask.

In addition to these environmental and health challenges in her current home, Denise has financial difficulties. Her chronic medical conditions do not allow her to work, and she has to spend almost her full ODSP income on rent. She also has been on the waitlist for the Rent-Geared-To-Income subsidy for more than seven years.

¹ This is a fictitious name to protect the constituent's privacy.

Due to these challenges, Denise said that she has applied for MAiD (Medical Assistance in Dying). She has explained to my team and me that living in abject poverty and not having a safe home are the main reasons behind her decision. She sees MAiD as her only option after numerous attempts and calls to your government and city agencies to find safe, comfortable and affordable housing.

MAiD *cannot* be her answer! No one should ever have to consider MAiD because our government does not provide enough support to people with disabilities and those who cannot afford skyrocketing housing rents. We have a housing affordability crisis, and for people with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity, their crisis is compounded.

Your Conservative government voted against an Ontario NDP motion to establish and fund a homelessness and housing crisis strategy. The call to build affordable and supportive housing echoes recommendations from the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association, the Canadian Mental Health Association and the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada. This is one of many Ontario NDP motions and bills your government has said “no” to, even as we knew that during a pandemic, it was key to keep people housed and off of the streets.

It is clear that we need to increase the number of units available for the Rent-Geared-To-Income subsidy. My office was informed that, currently, people who have applied for subsidized housing in 2013 are receiving invitations (with the exception of those on the priority list). That’s a nine-year wait.

I am begging you to respond to her advocates, who have reached out on her behalf. I pled with Denise on the phone to hang on, to give me time to see how I could help, but I cannot do this on my own. You are currently in government, and we need your support. Otherwise, I fear we may lose Denise, and that cannot be an option.

I am also sending a letter to the City of Toronto requesting that Denise be granted priority status on the waitlist for subsidized housing. I am hopeful that the City will consider Denise's health circumstances, including MCS, and grant this request.

Please feel free to reach out should you require any additional information to support my constituent. I have also included here a [link to a news story](#) on Denise’s untenable and inhumane situation, as well as a link to her [GoFundMe](#) page, which her supporters have been forced to create on her behalf because of the reported lack of response from the government and the multiple broken systems Denise is caught in.

I hope to hear from you this week, given the urgency of the situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'JA' or 'Jill Andrew', written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Jill Andrew, PhD,
MPP for Toronto—St. Paul’s