

**Ministry of
Municipal Affairs
and Housing**

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234-2020-5002

April 23, 2021

Bruce Killah
Vice Chair
Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board
Melody.Ouellette@msdsb.net

Dear Bruce Killah:

Thank you for your correspondence outlining the impacts that Bill 204, the *Helping Tenants and Small Businesses Act, 2020* will have on the community housing sector within the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board. We welcome continued feedback from our municipal partners and appreciate you sharing this information with us, including the financial assessment of the potential impacts.

Our government recognizes the critical role of our municipal partners and community housing providers in providing safe, stable and affordable housing to vulnerable members of our communities. We are also aware of the pressures the broader housing and homelessness sector is facing, and the great steps the community housing sector is taking to protect its residents and communities in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

This is why, we have made multiple investments to respond to COVID-19 needs in the housing and homelessness sector. Under the federal-provincial Safe Restart Agreement (SRA), funding of up to \$4 billion has been committed in support of municipalities and transit systems. The funding is being provided through four different streams, which include Municipal Operating Funding and Ontario's Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF), both administered by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Using the Municipal Operating Funding, municipalities have the flexibility to use funding to address the priorities of their communities based on their unique COVID-related 2020 operating pressures.

Under the province's SSRF, my ministry has made multiple investments in 2020-21 to Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators, totalling \$765 million. This flexible funding is allowing local Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators to provide services and supports for vulnerable populations based on their local circumstances.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board has been approved for over \$3 million in SSRF funding.

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On October 1, 2020, the *Helping Tenants and Small Businesses Act, 2020* received Royal Assent. As you know, the Act amends the *Residential Tenancies Act, 2006* to freeze rent in 2021 for nearly all rent-controlled and non-rent-controlled units and give the vast majority of tenants some relief during these unprecedented times.

This includes units in community housing where tenants pay market rent and geared-to-income rent, as well as affordable rental housing units created through various federally and/or provincially funded housing programs. The freeze on rent ensures that the most vulnerable residents, including low-income households and seniors, have the protections, predictability and stability they need during this time.

The sustainability of the community housing sector is a priority for our government and is directly tied to our goals under the **Community Housing Renewal Strategy** – to sustain, repair, and grow our community housing system, making it work better for the people it serves.

Once again, thank you for bringing your concerns to my attention. Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,



Steve Clark
Minister

- c. Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)