



For Immediate Release

Ontario's Housing Industry Submits Poverty and Affordable Housing Solutions to Ontario Government

Toronto, May 8, 2008 – A coalition of groups representing Ontario's Housing Industry released a wide ranging set of recommendations today to the Ontario government to address the province's poverty and affordable housing challenges.

Ontario's Housing Industry commends the Ontario government for its renewed commitment to reducing poverty and expanding opportunities for those with low incomes. The recommendations present fiscally responsible and cost effective ways of improving housing affordability in Ontario.

Key recommendations of Ontario's Housing Industry include:

1. Remove government imposed cost and regulatory barriers to the supply of land and new housing which constrain housing opportunities for lower income households;
2. Create a long-term portable housing allowance program to provide immediate assistance to low income households who have housing affordability problems;
3. Stop the regressive taxation of tenants by equalizing residential and multi-residential property tax rates across Ontario;
4. Address homelessness by focusing on special needs housing and services for the hard-to-house and integrating enhanced support services within housing projects;
5. Make strategic investments to fix Ontario's existing social housing stock.

In the past, Ontario has wasted vast resources on government sponsored housing production which was very expensive, helped only a small number of households and left a costly legacy to maintain in a good state of repair. Almost 600,000 Ontario households are still in core housing need. Previous mistakes can be avoided by understanding how housing markets work, removing barriers to housing supply, providing direct assistance to those in need and ending the unfavourable property tax treatment of tenants.

Ontario's Housing Industry includes the following groups: BILD (Building Industry and Land Development Association, bildgta.ca); FRPO (Federation of Rental-housing Providers of Ontario, frpo.org); OHBA (Ontario Home Builders' Association, ohba.ca); OREA (Ontario Real Estate Association, orea.com); REALPAC (Real Property Association of Canada, realpac.ca); RESCON (Residential Construction Council of Ontario, rescon.ws); and TREB (Toronto Real Estate Board, torontorealestateboard.com).

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Copies of the policy submission may be downloaded from any of the above websites.