



Office for Systemic Justice

April 11, 2024

Dear Minister Fraser,

Re: The Humanitarian and Housing Crisis in Ontario

Each day in the news cycle across Canada we hear about encampments on the streets and parks of our cities and towns. However, this is not only a housing crisis, but also includes a lack of stock, affordability, poverty, mental illness and the use of opioid and synthetic drugs. The convergence of these issues is creating a perfect storm.

Governments of all stripes, Federal and Provincial, and municipal are needed to help address this crisis and work together with professional services to address these needs on the front line. For many, supports are as essential as a roof overhead. They are also critical to upstream prevention, divert people from slipping into homelessness, mental illness or a drug crisis.

Money is needed but money that also includes services for mental health, addiction, community systems navigation and coordination. Without the supportive housing model to be fully funded, it will collapse and homelessness with all the other problems that accompany this will escalate. Spending money on only part of the supports that are needed, will not solve this growing crisis.

We believe there is inadequate funding for these critical human resources that are required to both prevent homelessness and transition people out of the chaos of homelessness, encampments and emergency shelters.

We are urging you, our elected government, to fund and to work **together** with all elected officials to find solutions. The people of Canada want to see a full press effort to address this crisis. This will require solutions of Finance, Community Services, Healthcare, and Mental Health all pulling together. All levels of Government were

effective during the pandemic in problem solving and collaborating. We can do this again.

I am writing on behalf of the Sisters of Joseph in Canada. As part of a faith community, we have always responded to community needs with benevolence, shelter support, community meals, clothing drives etc. Today more is needed. We want governments of every level at community tables to work with us. Canada is only as good as it treats its most needy and vulnerable citizens.

We are asking you as a government to join us in addressing our most challenging humanitarian crisis. We look forward to hearing from you and engaging your ideas and solutions to assist the citizens of Ontario.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joan Atkinson, CSJ". The signature is written in a cursive style.

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