

THE PEOPLE'S PLATFORM

BC ACORN
Provincial Platform 2021



AFFORDABLE HOMES

Increasing Supply

Inclusionary Zoning

Pass legislation that enables municipalities to enact mandatory inclusionary zoning bylaws. This would allow municipalities to ensure that affordable housing based on a household's income (primarily geared towards incomes less than \$40-50,000/year) is a part of every new development.

10,000 New Social Housing Units Built Per Year

We often hear about how the issue about housing is a supply issue, we do agree. The Province must build 10,000 units of rent geared to income social housing units for low income families every year.

Rent Stabilization

Vacancy Control and Rental Unit Registry

Vacancy control and a Rental Unit Registry will ensure that rent on a unit can only be increased by a certain percentage every year, regardless of whether it is occupied by tenants or not. Current laws incentivise landlords to kick long-time tenants out so they can increase the rent however much the market will allow. The new anti-renoviction law in BC will help curb this unscrupulous landlord tactic, but certainly will not eliminate it.

Rent Freeze

Implement a 4 year rent freeze on standard rent increases - rent stays the same for the next 4 years. The current freeze lasting until the end of 2021 is insufficient to deal with the crippling effect that provincial government inaction has done to the rental housing market.

HEALTHY HOMES

Maintaining Quality

Province Wide Standards of Maintenance & Landlord Licensing

Province-wide standards of maintenance, coupled with a landlord licensing system that enforces those standards means the province can ensure that every tenant lives in a healthy home.

Enforcement

Full Review of the RTA

We need a full review of the Residential Tenancy Act with tenants as important stakeholders. The review must:

- Look at ways to expand the mandate of the Compliance and Enforcement Unit to crack down on unscrupulous landlords.
- Create access to justice for tenants taking their landlord to the residential tenancy branch hearing and adjudication processes.

PWD & SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Poverty Prevention

Raise the Rates

Persons with Disability deserve a right to live in dignity. BC cannot be a province that casts aside persons with disability to live in abject poverty. Raise the Rates for PWD to \$2000 per month indexed to inflation and Social Assistance to \$1700 per month indexed to inflation.

Review of the Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act so that all aspects of the system can be looked at to ensure it is meeting the needs of people with disabilities and able bodied people out of work (social assistance).

The review would look at:

- All income clawbacks to ensure that people do not needlessly lose income
- All allowances (e.g. dental, eye coverage, moving, start up) so that they meet the actual needs of recipients
- Any barriers for eligible people to get on PWD or social assistance. People who are eligible have other issues in life and should not have to be burdened with red tape to receive benefits they are entitled to.

FAIR BANKING

Regulate Predatory Lenders

Create protections for low-income people by regulating predatory lenders that provide high interest payday and installment loans.

- Lower the maximum interest rate for predatory payday lenders to \$12 per 100 dollars borrowed
- Extend the payback period for alternative, high-interest lending products to 42 days, as seen in Alberta
- License high interest lending (E.G instalment loans, car title loans, rent to own furniture) to cap interest rates at 30% annually and limit loan insurance
- Create a real-time database to track predatory loans (to prevent roll over loans and to track lender practices)
- Create a government loan program for people who receive government benefits at zero interest for amounts under \$1500 paid back within 2 years

WORKING ISSUES

Worker Safety

10 Paid Sick Days Now

We join the call from BC Labour Union for 10 Paid Sick Days: The BC government has announced a temporary paid sick leave program until the end of 2021, but it won't protect workers and our communities in the next public health crisis. Workers need you to take action to secure 10 days of paid sick leave per year, permanently.