



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Inquiries: Contact Ty Riches, Lead Organizer
(289) 808-3515 | toacorn@acorncanada.org

Toronto ACORN applauds supports for tenants in 2026 City Budget; pledges to keep organizing

City budget investments necessary while the Province undermines tenant protections

Toronto, Ontario — The City of Toronto's proposed 2026 Budget, presented on January 8, invests millions of dollars into supports and programs that directly benefit the lives of tenants and working class people in this city.

In particular, ACORN members are most relieved to see expansions to the **Air Conditioner Assistance Program** and the **RentSafeTO** program.

As the planet heats up, air conditioning is becoming more and more a necessity. In 2025, the Air Conditioner Assistance Program provided 500 air conditioners to low-income seniors across the city. The proposed expansion is a welcome step in the fight to protect low-income and working class Torontonians from the brutal effects of the climate crisis.

"[Tenants are] in dire need. It's something that needs to be addressed ongoing, because there are too many people out there, especially seniors and people on disability, that can't afford air conditioning."

— **Stacey Semple**, Chair, Downtown Toronto ACORN Chapter

With this budget's proposed expansion of the RentSafeTO's team of bylaw enforcement officers, more City resources are allocated to holding negligent landlords accountable and ensuring every tenant lives in a safe and healthy home. While there is a lot of work to do still to give RentSafeTO teeth, this starts with giving the program the resources it needs to succeed.

Other welcome investments include an additional \$2.6 million for the **Toronto Rent Bank**, \$1.8 million for enforcing the **Rental Renovation Bylaw**, and continued investments in the **Multi-Unit Residential Acquisition (MURA) Fund**. At a time when Doug Ford's provincial government is stripping away tenant protections and affordable housing policies like inclusionary zoning, the 2026 City Budget is a win for ACORN members—but underscores the limited resources the City is working with, and the need for the Province to take action. We will keep on organizing and continue to work with the City of Toronto to challenge the provincial government to stand up for renters. The People Shall Rule!

The Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, Canada is a community union of low income and working class people fighting for social and economic justice, with over 195,000 members. An affiliate of ACORN International, organizing in over 20 countries. Learn more at acorncanada.org.