

April 2, 2025

The Honourable Doug Downey  
Attorney General of Ontario  
720 Bay Street, 11th Floor  
Toronto, ON M7A 2S9

**RE: Modernizing the Landlord and Tenant Board—A Critical Step to a Stronger Rental Housing Market and a Stronger Ontario**

Dear Minister Downey,

On behalf of the Toronto Regional Real Estate Board (TRREB) and our over 70,000 REALTOR® Members, congratulations on your reappointment as Ontario's Attorney General. Ontario needs your strong leadership now more than ever as it heads into a period of economic instability and change.

I am writing today to underscore the urgent need for comprehensive reform of Ontario's Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) as part of the province's plan to increase its economic competitiveness and resilience. The LTB is a cornerstone of the province's rental housing system. We commend you and the government for taking concrete steps in focusing on making changes that have led to several improvements, including making progress on reducing the backlog of cases. When it works, the system ensures fairness, protects rights, and fosters confidence in Ontario's rental market. Today, however, the system continues to face challenges. The Board's persistent backlog—last publicly reported at over 53,000 unresolved applications—has eroded trust for both tenants and housing providers. Delays have routinely exceeded 12 months. These challenges are not merely administrative—they are destabilizing the housing market, deterring investment in secondary rental units, and increasing the shortage of rental housing units for tenants.

With new U.S. tariffs and global uncertainty impacting economic growth, Ontario must send a strong signal that it remains a stable, attractive place to invest and live. A reliable and efficient LTB is fundamental to that message. TRREB's recent report, which we had an opportunity to discuss with you, *Breaking the Backlog*, provides a clear roadmap to achieving a stronger and more reliable LTB.

**TRREB's Recommendations**

**1. Restoring Access to Justice: The Problem of Virtual-Only Hearings**

Virtual hearings were introduced as part of the LTB's "digital first" strategy in 2020, but they have created significant barriers to justice for many Ontarians, especially vulnerable groups. Access to technology, reliable internet, and private spaces for

virtual hearings has proven challenging for tenants and landlords alike, leading to chaotic, delayed, or even inaccessible hearings. Restoring in-person hearings as a default option, while maintaining digital hearings when both parties agree, would help address these accessibility issues. Real-time technical support must also be provided to reduce delays caused by technology failures.

## **2. Tackling the Growing Backlog: Delays in Case Resolution**

The LTB backlog has reached critical levels, with some cases taking months or even years to be resolved. Many tenants are left in unsafe conditions, and landlords struggle with unpaid rent and damaged properties due to delays. The report recommends creating a specialized backlog-reduction team focused on addressing older and urgent cases. This team would report directly to the Ministry of the Attorney General and use targeted strategies to expedite the resolution of high-priority cases while keeping the flow of new cases moving efficiently.

## **3. Improving Efficiency: Hiring and Retaining Adjudicators**

Despite the recent hiring of more adjudicators, the LTB still struggles with efficiency due to a lack of proper training and reliance on part-time staff. Cross-appointment of adjudicators with other tribunals limits the time they can dedicate to LTB cases. This report recommends enhancing the training process for adjudicators to ensure they are prepared to handle a wide variety of cases. Additionally, part-time adjudicators should be assigned workloads that reflect their availability, and funding should be aligned with service demand to ensure staffing matches the LTB's growing caseload.

## **4. LTB Appointments: Ensuring Stability in Tribunal Staffing**

The current appointment process for LTB adjudicators can be slow and often leads to turnover after elections, disrupting case flow. Adjudicators with significant expertise are often replaced, which further exacerbates delays. This report calls for streamlining the appointment process by introducing reforms that ensure qualified, experienced adjudicators remain in their positions. Establishing an independent body, such as an Adjudicative Tribunals Justice Council, would ensure that appointments are based on merit and experience.

## **5. Delayed Justice: Timelines for LTB Cases Prior to Termination Dates**

Lengthy delays at the LTB prevent both landlords and tenants from receiving timely decisions on critical issues, such as evictions, rent arrears, and repairs. The report recommends enforcing stricter timelines for resolving cases, particularly those related to tenancy terminations.

These reforms, taken together, represent a path forward—not only to eliminate the backlog but to build a system that is faster, fairer, and more resilient. Ontario cannot solve its housing crisis without a well-functioning LTB. Nor can it sustain its economic competitiveness when foundational institutions lack the capacity to deliver justice in a timely way. Thank you for your

leadership on this crucial file which is essential to the future of Ontario's rental housing market, and we look forward to continuing working in partnership with you on this matter.

Sincerely,



Elechia Barry-Sproule  
President  
Toronto Regional Real Estate Board

Cc:

Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Honourable Victor Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade  
David Corbett, Deputy Attorney General