

For Immediate Release
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Landlord registry a \$1 million gimmick that will worsen housing crisis

Halifax Regional Municipality's proposed landlord registry will do nothing to solve the housing crisis and further punishes rental housing providers who must be part of the solution.

"Private rental housing providers, especially those who are small owner/operators, are sick and tired of governments attacking them with more red tape and higher costs," said Kevin Russell, Executive Director of the Investment Property Owners Association of Nova Scotia. "In a high inflation, high-interest rate environment, with property assessments going through the roof, the provincial rent cap is forcing people to sell their properties at an unprecedented rate, reducing the available housing supply in Halifax Regional Municipality and making the housing crisis worse."

Halifax Regional Municipality's staff report on the landlord registry admits the cost to taxpayers to implement the new registry will be close to \$1.2 million over the next four years and involve hiring four new by-law enforcement staff.

Ursula Prosegger is a Dartmouth property manager. When an unhoused person was found repeatedly sleeping in one of her apartment building hallways last fall, resulting in a fire safety issue due to smoking, she turned to municipal and provincial elected officials in downtown Dartmouth for help. Nobody at the municipal and provincial levels of government would help, opting to point fingers and blame different levels of government.

"Imagine what \$1.2 million could do to help our most vulnerable?" asked Prosegger. "It's just shocking, especially during a time our municipal government is looking at tax hikes to deal with a budget crunch, that Halifax Regional Council's answer for the housing crisis is spending tax dollars on red tape and more staff, instead of helping our community's most vulnerable get a roof over their heads?"

Russell noted that Halifax Regional Municipality ignored stakeholder feedback submitted during consultations from 2017 to 2019, where the consensus was that existing bylaws would be sufficient to deal with maintenance issues they were experiencing.

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