



Metro Vancouver Board joins campaign to fix the co-op housing crunch

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(BURNABY) Communities from Lion's Bay to Langley have joined the campaign urging the provincial government to protect low-income co-op members at risk of losing their homes.

The Metro Vancouver Board threw its weight behind the "You hold the key: fix the co-op housing crunch" campaign today at its meeting in Burnaby. Directors unanimously passed a motion calling on Victoria to put a provincial rent supplement program in place for low-income co-op members as federal housing agreements end.

Co-operative Housing Federation of B.C. (CHF BC) Executive Director Thom Armstrong said he's delighted to have such powerful partners behind the campaign.

"We're very happy to have Metro's support in our campaign to protect vulnerable housing co-op members," said Armstrong.

"This is a vote of support for seniors, people with disabilities, single parents, new Canadians and many others who need help from the provincial government to remain in their homes."

The Metro motion is a response by mayors and councillors across the region to the looming crisis posed by the end of federal agreements with housing co-ops in B.C. and across Canada. As federal agreements expire, so does the financial assistance that made housing affordable for low-income co-op members.

Federal assistance to co-ops starts ending this year. By 2017, more than 1,500 co-op households will face a crisis as their homes become unaffordable. By 2020, that number will climb to 3,000 households.

CHF BC and the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada's "You hold the key: fix the co-op housing crunch" campaign is aimed at getting a solution to the affordability crunch.

The motion passed by Metro also encourages local governments throughout B.C. to urge the federal and provincial governments to work together to reduce the uncertainty for vulnerable housing co-op members by ensuring long-term, cost-shared rental assistance programs are in place as federal co-op housing agreements expire.

The Metro Vancouver region is home to over 2.3 million people and comprises 23 members: 21 municipalities, one electoral area and one treaty First Nation. It combines the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD), Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District, the Greater Vancouver Water District and the Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation under a single umbrella organization.

CHF BC is a co-operative association made up of member housing co-ops and related organizations in B.C. The association represents 242 co-op communities (comprising nearly 13,000 households) across the province.

For background on the “You hold the key: fix the co-op housing crunch” campaign, please visit the CHF BC website at: <http://www.chf.bc.ca/eoacampaign2014>

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Text of the Metro Vancouver Motion

The motion supporting CHF BC/CHF Canada’s “You hold the key: Fix the co-op housing crunch” campaign is item 3.1 (Housing Committee reports) on the GVRD board’s consent agenda for March 28.

3.1 Expiration of Federal Government Subsidies for Co-op Housing

That the GVRD Board:

- a) Write a letter requesting the Province to fund and deliver a rent supplement program to replace expiring federal subsidies for low-income members in housing co-ops;
- b) Write a letter requesting the federal government to reinvest the savings from expiring federal housing agreements to share the costs of funding the rent supplement program; and
- c) encourage local governments throughout British Columbia to urge the federal and provincial governments to work together to reduce the uncertainty for vulnerable housing co-op members by ensuring that long-term, cost-shared rental assistance programs are in place as federal co-op housing agreements expire.



Co-operative Housing
Federation of Canada