

February 2, 2015

Hon. Yasir Naqvi, MPP
Ministry of Community Safety and
Correctional Services
18th Floor, George Drew Building
25 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1Y6



Dear Minister Naqvi,

RE: Care occupancy designation under Ontario Regulation 150/13

The Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association (ONPHA) believes that every Ontarian has the right to a safe, secure and affordable home. Legislation like the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997* (“the Act”) plays an important role in ensuring that our homes and communities are safe by setting out clear direction for property owners and developers. We acknowledge and share this priority with your Ministry.

Ontario Regulation 150/13 made under the Act includes a revised definition of a “care occupancy.” Based on the new definition, several of our member organizations have been informed by their fire departments that they are now considered care occupancies.

We believe that these members have been misclassified, as this designation does not accurately reflect the nature and role of non-profit housing in Ontario. Non-profit housing providers operate affordable rental housing for households that live independently in the community and serve a mix of tenants similar to that present in the private rental housing market. In select cases, third party services may be delivered in our members’ properties to improve tenants’ quality of life. Such services should not be considered “special care” within the context of this regulation.

We recommend that Regulation 150/13 be amended to reflect a narrower, more accurate definition of what constitutes a “care occupancy”. We also recommend that further direction and guidance be provided to fire departments who are responsible for making the designation. Doing so will allow our members to continue to serve low- and moderate-income families, individuals and seniors without additional and unnecessary costs.



The attached briefing note provides more detail on our recommendations. We would like to meet with you to discuss the issue and the challenges it presents to our members. We will contact your scheduler shortly to arrange a meeting.

Sincerely,

Keith Hambly
President
ONTARIO NON-PROFIT HOUSING ASSOCIATION

cc.

Hon. Ted McMeekin, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Janet Hope, Assistant Deputy Minister (Housing), MMAH

Ted Wieclawek, Fire Marshal and Chief of Emergency Management