

**For Immediate Release**  
**November 22, 2022**

### **Proposed Halifax Tax Hike Will Worsen Housing Crisis**

Halifax Regional Municipality's proposed 8% tax hike for its upcoming budget will make the city's housing crisis worse, said Kevin Russell, Executive Director of the Investment Property Owners Association of Nova Scotia.

"Because of the Nova Scotia government's rent cap, rental housing providers have no way to pass along increased costs," said Russell. "With energy costs skyrocketing, a federal carbon tax about to be imposed on Nova Scotia, insurance premiums, labour costs – everything is getting more expensive. The last thing we need is the municipal government piling on another tax hike."

Russell noted that because of increased costs and the provincial government's 2% rent cap, rental housing providers are being forced to sell rental units, with new owners either moving into the units themselves, converting the units away from money-losing rental properties, repurposing the units for new tenants. In September 2022, not-for-profit Adsum and several post-secondary institutions reported there were fewer rental housing units available for students as rental housing providers sold their properties and left the market. Available rental units in Halifax listed on the website kijiji have also dropped by more than 10,000 over the last 24 months.

"Governments at all levels need to wake up and realize that solving a housing crisis requires working with everyone – the private sector, public sector and not-for-profits – instead of just dumping added costs onto private sector operators that provide the majority of rental housing in the city and the province," added Russell.

IPOANS is calling on Halifax Regional Municipality to:

- Hold the line on tax rates in 2023-2024;
- Either scrap the proposed "landlord registry" advanced by Councillor Wayne Mason or extend the registry to include a listing of tenants who repeatedly damage or destroy property, fail to follow the Residential Tenancies Act or commit criminal activities in residential housing buildings.

IPOANS also urged the Nova Scotia government to extend the Capped Assessment Program (CAP) to include residential housing buildings. The former PC government brought mobile homes under the CAP more than a decade ago. This action can be done by cabinet order, as the mobile home decision was, and does not require legislation.

“The Nova Scotia government has shown courage to take action on issues where Halifax Regional Municipality has failed so miserably, like planning decision for housing. Since the rent cap was imposed and extended without any consultation by the provincial government, we urge Tim Houston’s government to help protect rental housing providers from the impact of Halifax’s tax hike by extending the CAP to fully cover our sector,” added Russell.

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Questions

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