

Petitioning the Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Advocacy Toolkit for Bill 205 (Housing Security Act)

Background

Why we need rent regulations in Alberta

The lack of affordable rental housing and the sharp rise in rents have become key issues in Alberta. As of December 2023, Alberta has seen the [greatest annual rent growth of any province](#), at a staggering 15.6% increase – with [rent prices in Edmonton and Calgary rising faster than anywhere else](#) in the country.

Today, landlords across the province are allowed to charge rents far higher than what's necessary to cover their expenses and make a reasonable profit. It is time for the Alberta government to put a stop to rent gouging and put in place strong rent regulation measures. This will ensure that rent prices are stable and reasonable, and that everyone in Alberta can enjoy housing security.

Last November, the Canadian Centre for Housing Rights (CCHR) launched the [Secure Homes for Renters](#) campaign, calling on governments across Canada to implement meaningful rent regulation. On December 5, 2023, Housing Critic Janis Irwin tabled a Private Members' Bill at the Legislative Assembly to introduce temporary rent caps in the province. [Bill 205 – Housing Statutes \(Housing Security\) Amendment Act](#) represents a first vital step toward rent regulation in Alberta. We would like to invite your organization and its members, as well as tenants' groups, housing advocates and lived experts in your network, to join us in demonstrating support for Bill 205. By mobilizing and joining voices in our communities, we can leverage our collective power to put pressure on decision-makers for the adoption of rent regulation measures in Alberta.

About this toolkit

This Advocacy Toolkit includes several actions you can take to lend your voice in support of Bill 205 and rent regulations in Alberta. There are many ways to petition your provincial government representatives and leaders: the more actions you take, the more voices will be heard by the provincial government. To make sure that your petition or letter of support speaks to this audience, CCHR has published guidelines on engaging with the provincial government, including letter-writing tips, that can be found in our [Tenant Leaders' Toolbox](#).

Supporting Bill 205

To demonstrate your support for the bill, you can sign existing petitions, and share your comments with the Housing Critic through their online public consultation or by writing directly to their office. If you have a large network of community peers, you might choose to start your own petition to the Legislative Assembly through its website and share it with your network. Finally, writing directly to your MLA can help convince them to cast their vote in favor of Bill 205 when it goes through 2nd reading. Whichever approach you choose, we recommend taking action before the Spring sitting begins on **February 28**.

Signing a petition to the provincial government

- Send a letter to the provincial government by signing and sharing ACORN's petition in support of Bill 205:

https://acorncanada.org/take_action/tell-the-ucp-to-support-bill-205-for-a-temporary-rent-cap/

Starting your own petition

- Write a petition following the Legislative Assembly's approved [template](#). Ask a member of the legislature who is not a Minister to present your petition during the next Assembly sitting. While this action is more time-consuming than others, it will help in showing popular support for Bill 205. It also ensures that your petition is read at the legislature and heard by all members of government.

<https://www.assembly.ab.ca/assembly-business/assembly-records/petitions>

Participating in the NDP's public consultation

- Provide feedback to the Alberta NDP Caucus through their online consultation page:

<https://www.albertasfuture.ca/event-registration/housing-security-act-consult>

Sending a letter of support to the Housing Critic

- Write a formal letter of support, using the writing tips provided in CCHR's [Tenant Leaders' Toolbox](#) – address and send to Janis Irwin, Critic for Housing and MLA for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood:

Edmonton.HighlandsNorwood@assembly.ab.ca

Asking your government representative to vote in favor of Bill 205

- An effective way to influence decision making is to gather as many votes as possible from MLAs in every riding. Knowing your provincial [constituency](#), you can send a letter in support of Bill 205 to the [MLA representing your constituency](#), copying the Housing Critic. The structure of the letter can be similar to the one for the Housing Critic. The content of the letter should provide impactful data or testimonies that would convince your MLA to consider voting for Bill 205.