



Co-operative Housing
Federation of Canada



CHRA ACHRU



NEWS RELEASE

Organizations Call for Budget 2017 to be the “Housing Budget”

(January 27, 2017, OTTAWA) – Three leading national housing and homelessness organizations today jointly called on the federal government to commit to long-term investment on the scale needed to tackle the housing crisis in Budget 2017. The three organizations – the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, and the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association – are united in their call for a solution that will ensure all Canadians have a safe and affordable place to call home.

In an end-of-year interview last month, Prime Minister Trudeau stated that affordable housing is “a fundamental building block that leads towards people being able to succeed,” and suggested significant investment in housing would be forthcoming in the 2017 Budget. Furthermore, the federal government committed to unveiling a National Housing Strategy that prioritizes the needs of Canada’s most vulnerable populations. The three organizations applaud the Prime Minister and his government for their commitment to housing, but caution that promises must turn to action in the 2017 budget.

There is no question that housing needs are great, especially when considering:

- 235,000 Canadians experience homelessness in a year.
- 1 in 5 renters spend more than half their income on housing.
- 1.5 million households can’t find decent housing they can afford.
- The affordability of housing for low-income families living in social and co-operative housing is uncertain, as federal funding agreements will expire. In the absence of a new federal commitment, by 2020, 175,000 fewer low-income households will be assisted compared to 2010.
- Indigenous households living in cities and communities experience higher rates of homelessness and are more likely to be living in precarious housing than non-Indigenous Canadians.
- A November 2016 report prepared by Morrison Park Advisors estimates total capital needs of the social housing sector to be in the range of \$8.4 billion to \$13.6 billion per year.

“The 2017 Budget and the subsequent National Housing Strategy marks an unparalleled opportunity to address the many pressing housing needs facing the most vulnerable members of our society,” stated Jeff Morrison, Executive Director of CHRA. “Today, our organizations are saying that the 2017 Budget needs to be the “housing budget” so that we can make meaningful progress in tackling the myriad of problems experienced daily by vulnerable households.”

“We agree with the Prime Minister when he calls affordable housing a building block to success,” said Nicholas Gazzard, Executive Director of CHF Canada. “Over the past fifty years we’ve developed a successful foundation of social and co-operative housing in Canada. Now let’s leverage this shared commitment to affordability and inclusion in order to tackle Canada’s housing crisis once and for all.”

“If Budget 2017 is the ‘Housing Budget’ we’ve been calling for, Canada could see the beginning of the end of homelessness,” said Tim Richter, President & CEO, of the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness. “A Housing Budget would save lives, reduce the incredible cost of homelessness, and would mean tens of thousands of low income Indigenous peoples, women, seniors, veterans, children and young people have a shot at a better life.”

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For more information, please contact:

Jeff Morrison, Executive Director, Canadian Housing and Renewal Association

P: 613-594-3007, x11 E: Jmorrison@chra-achru.ca

Tim Richter, President and CEO, Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness

P: 587-216-5615 E: Tim@caeh.ca

Tim Ross, Director, Strategic Affairs, Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada

P: 613-230-2201, x222 E: TRoss@chfcanada.coop