



Jamie West

Member of Provincial Parliament, Sudbury
Député provincial, Sudbury

December 2nd, 2019

McMurtry-Scott Bldg
11th Floor
720 Bay St
Toronto, ON
M7A 2S9

Dear Attorney General Hon. Doug Downey,

I am writing regarding problems people in my riding are experiencing with the Ontario Landlord Tenant Board (LTB). Since fall 2018, my office has been contacted by tenants and landlords negatively impacted by the closure of the LTB service counter and significant delays for LTB hearings. Current problems with the LTB are limiting access to justice and housing for people in my riding.

The closure of the LTB front desk in Sudbury has made it much more difficult for people in my riding to resolve landlord/ tenant issues. As a result of the closure they are unable to access advice and direction from the LTB. Many of the constituents who have reached out to me about this issue noted that the former LTB staff were highly knowledgeable. They assisted with reviewing applications and advising the public on completing forms. When constituents have sought assistance from the LTB by phone they receive a busy signal or have to wait an extremely long time to speak with a customer service officer. Constituents tell me that without the assistance of the LTB front desk they feel lost trying to navigate the LTB process.

Additionally, the shortage of LTB adjudicators in our region has meant significant delays for LTB hearings. My constituents are sometimes waiting more than three months for a hearing. Meanwhile, tenants in my riding are being forced to live in unsafe housing and property owners are losing rental income. When people are able to have a hearing, these hearings are often being conducted over the phone raising concerns about the security and privacy of the proceedings.

I am very worried about how the problems with the LTB will impact access to rental housing in Sudbury. As a result of negative experiences with the LTB process landlords are making the lease process more stringent or removing their properties from the rental market. Tenants are also finding it more difficult to find rental accommodation and are unsure if they will be able to hold their landlord accountable if they fail to meet their responsibilities as the property owner.

Since I last contacted your predecessor's office regarding this issue in March 2019, the situation has become worse. In March, my office was told that LTB adjudicators were being hired to reduce wait times for hearings. However, delays appear to have increased and the quality of service has not improved. Tenants and landlords in my community are becoming increasingly frustrated.

Community Office

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On behalf of my constituents in Sudbury, I am calling on you to reopen the LTB front desk in Sudbury and address LTB hearing delays as soon as possible. People in my riding need immediate action to ensure they have access to the LTB and to protect the availability of rental housing in our city.

Sincerely,

Jamie West
MPP for Sudbury

CC. Sara Singh, MPP for Brampton Centre, Official opposition critic for Housing
Suze Morrison, MPP for Toronto Centre, Official opposition critic for Tenant Rights

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