Hon. Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Bldg. Rm 281, Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON  M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford,

Re: alPHa Resolution A23-04 - Ending Underhousing and Homelessness in Ontario

On behalf of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa) and its Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health, Boards of Health Section and Affiliate Organizations, I am writing to introduce the above-named resolution, that was passed by our membership at our 2023 Annual Conference.

Housing is widely accepted as a key determinant of health, with the health of a population directly linked with the availability of adequate, affordable housing. With homelessness and underhousing having reached crisis levels in Ontario, leadership from the provincial government to develop and implement a comprehensive multisectoral plan to address them has become imperative.

In passing this resolution, our members have endorsed the Association of Municipalities of Ontario’s Call to Action on Housing and Homelessness and are calling upon the provincial government to undertake specific actions that are aimed at ending underhousing and homelessness in Ontario.

We invite you to examine the additional details and rationale that are included in the attached resolution, and we would welcome an opportunity to meet with you and your staff to discuss them further. To schedule a meeting, please have your staff contact Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, alPHa, at loretta@alphaweb.org or 647-325-9594.

Sincerely,

Dr. Charles Gardner,  
President

Copy:  Hon. Sean Fraser, Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities (Fed.)  
Hon. Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health  
Hon. Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy, Ministry of Finance  
Hon. Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services  
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Ontario  
Elizabeth Walker, Executive Lead, Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Colin Best, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario

Encl.
The Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aPHa) is a not-for-profit organization that provides leadership to Ontario’s boards of health. aPHa represents all of Ontario’s 34 boards of health, medical officers and associate medical officers of health, and senior public health managers in each of the public health disciplines – nursing, inspections, nutrition, dentistry, health promotion, epidemiology, and business administration. As public health leaders, aPHa advises and lends expertise to members on the governance, administration, and management of health units. The Association also collaborates with governments and other health organizations, advocating for a strong, effective, and efficient public health system in the province. Through policy analysis, discussion, collaboration, and advocacy, aPHa’s members and staff act to promote public health policies that form a strong foundation for the improvement of health promotion and protection, disease prevention and surveillance services in all of Ontario’s communities.
RESOLUTION A23-04

TITLE: Ending Underhousing and Homelessness in Ontario

SPONSOR: alPHa Boards of Health Section

WHEREAS housing is recognized as a human right in Canada under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights \(^1\); and

WHEREAS the goal of Public Health is to reduce health inequities and improve the health of the whole population; and

WHEREAS housing is widely accepted as a key determinant of health, with the health of a population directly linked with the availability of adequate, affordable housing; and

WHEREAS the negative impacts of housing insecurity and homelessness include poor mental health, higher risk of infectious diseases, higher risk of chronic diseases, and higher risk of injuries among others \(^2\); and

WHEREAS ending underhousing and homelessness requires a range of housing, social service, and health solutions from a range of stakeholders; and

WHEREAS leadership and urgent action is needed from the provincial government on an emergency basis to develop, resource, and implement a comprehensive plan to prevent, reduce and ultimately end underhousing and homelessness in Ontario; and

WHEREAS The Association of Municipalities of Ontario, a strategic partner of alPHa has asked that their partners support their Call to Action on Housing and Homelessness;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT alPHa support AMO's Call to Action on Housing and Homelessness;

AND FURTHER THAT alPHa call on the Provincial Government to:

- acknowledge that housing is a social determinant of health and a human right.
- acknowledge that homelessness in Ontario is a social, economic, and health crisis.
- commit to the goal of ending underhousing and homelessness in Ontario.
- work with alPHa, AMO and a broad range of community, health, Indigenous and economic partners to develop, resource, and implement an action plan to achieve this goal.

AND FURTHER THAT the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Ministers of Health; Municipal Affairs and Housing; Ministry of Finance; the Premier's office; relevant ministries of the Federal Government; and Children, Community and Social Services be so advised.

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