



LEGAL ASSISTANCE FUNDS NEEDED



HELP STOP FORCED SALE OF HOUSING CO-OPS

It started with municipal service managers wanting to take over two co-ops in Ontario, but it's shaping up to be one of the biggest fights in the history of co-op housing in Canada.

If Ontario municipalities succeed in taking over even a few housing co-ops, it will set a dangerous precedent for co-ops right across the country. We need to let other municipalities know we're not going to stand by and watch them take our homes without a fight.

That's why we're preparing to take this battle to the Supreme Court of Canada.



The Legal Assistance Fund needs your support as CHF Canada seeks leave to appeal the takeover of Thornhill Green Housing Co-op to the Supreme Court of Canada.

HERE'S THE LATEST ON WHAT'S HAPPENING AND ON HOW YOU CAN HELP.

“The strategy is clearly to wear us down. They think we'll eventually run out of money and motivation. These municipalities don't seem to understand co-ops, and they certainly aren't familiar with the history of the co-op movement in Canada. We want to take this battle to the Supreme Court to send a clear message that we won't give up the fight against the takeover of housing co-ops.”

Wes Hosler, president, CHF Canada



Thornhill Green stands its ground

Earlier this year, Thornhill Green Co-operative Homes and CHF Canada went to the Ontario Court of Appeal to block the forced sale of the co-op to York Region's housing authority for a little more than half its market value. In June, the Court unfortunately ruled in favour of the municipality.

This appeal was the result of several rounds of legal action beginning in 2006 when York Region put the co-op into receivership. In May 2008, the receiver asked for court approval to "sell" the co-op to the Region. York Region thought it would be a quick receivership and sale—the co-op had just two weeks to respond—but Thornhill Green Co-op and CHF Canada fought back.

Now four years later, we are seeking leave to appeal the Ontario court's ruling to the Supreme Court of Canada, and we need more money to keep up the fight.

What's at stake

If Thornhill Green is taken over, it will be the first time in Canada a municipality has successfully taken away a housing co-op over the objections of its members.

If Thornhill Green Co-op is sold, it will be the first time in Canada a municipality, or any government, has succeeded in taking over a housing co-op over the protests of its members. Frank Bennett, Canada's leading authority on receivership law, has called it "expropriation without compensation".

A win by York Region will send a message to municipalities that they can take

over co-ops instead of working with members to deal with problems. This could create a domino effect, leading to the loss of many more co-ops.



Together we can win

Last year, co-op members and CHF Canada prevented government seizure of the 12-unit Whitehorse Housing Co-op. This summer we celebrated a ruling in Ontario preventing the takeover of Matthew Co-op by the Simcoe County service manager.

Together, we have fought and won many battles in defence of co-op homes: on Section 95 subsidies, preventing clawbacks from co-op surpluses, and saving leaky co-ops in British Columbia. Let's show once again that Canada's housing co-ops are united and a force to be reckoned with.

Many co-ops have already come forward to help Thornhill Green and Matthew co-ops, donating \$70,000 to CHF Canada's Legal Assistance Fund to date. But we'll need more donations from more co-ops to win this important fight.

To donate, please make your cheque payable to CHF Canada and on the memo line write "Legal Assistance Fund."

Send it to: CHF Canada, Suite 311,
225 Metcalfe Street
Ottawa, ON K2P 1P9

Thank you!