

# Landlords with Long-term Leases call for more Latitude in Ontario Rent Caps

By Derek Baldwin

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Quinte landlords leasing properties to long-term tenants for years at low rental rates say they are falling behind as costs rise due to runaway inflation and a 1.2 per cent rental cap in place for 2022 by the Ontario government.

While landlords are charging exorbitant rental rates for newly available apartments on the market not bound by provincial rent caps, unit owners with long-term tenants protected by rent caps are finding themselves in a struggle to make ends meet, says the Quinte Region Landlords Association (QLRA).

A 1.2 per cent rent cap was put in place for 2022 by Ontario Premier Doug Ford in January meaning long-term tenants renewing their annual leases will pay \$12 for every \$1,000 they pay in rent for the year ahead.

Rob Gentile, president of the QLRA, said in an interview Thursday times are tough for everyone.

“I think you’ve got two classifications of landlords right now. You’ve got ones who have had turnover that have been able to adjust their rents significantly higher for market rates. But you have a lot of landlords who are small mom-



and-pop people who have had the same tenants for 10 and 15 years,” said Gentile.

“That’s the category of landlords who are hurting the most because their costs have been going up double digits but they’ve been prohibited from keeping up with their costs because of the extremely limited rent guidelines.”

The association has yet to make a direct appeal to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Gentile issued a press release Wednesday asserting local landlords are no different than any other service provider.

“The public accepts that grocery stores and other essential services need to raise prices to cover their costs,” said Gentile. “We want the government to understand that landlords are no different

than these businesses; they provide a service and the costs associated with it are not fully in their control.”

Numbers presented by the association cite the 2021 average inflation rate was 3.4 per cent, with December coming in at 4.8 per cent, according to Statistics Canada’s Consumer Price Index.

Gentile also pointed out that incomes provided by social programs such as Ontario Disability Support Program and Ontario Works have not kept up over the years with the rising cost of living.

The Ontario’s Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, meanwhile, stated on the ontario.ca website “the rent increase guideline for 2022 is 1.2 per cent,” and noted the “guideline is the maximum a landlord can increase most tenants’ rent during a year without the approval of the Landlord and Tenant Board.”

“For most tenants, your rent can’t go up by more than the rent increase guideline for every year,” the ministry said. Landlords must serve notice of a rent increase 90 days before the increase is set to take effect, the province said. ♦