

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf. 03-07-00-0127
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE 23 March 2000

TO/DEST. Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP. Committee Co-ordinator

SUBJECT/OBJET **CENTRE FOR EQUALITY RIGHTS IN ACCOMMODATION**

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That the Community Services Committee receive this presentation for information.

BACKGROUND

Attached is a report from the Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation. Committee Chair Alex Munter has requested that this material be presented at the Community Services Committee meeting of 6 April 2000.

M.J. Beauregard



CERA

Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation
Centre pour les droits à l'égalité au logement

517 College Street, Ste. 408, Toronto, Ontario M6G 1A8
Tel: 944-0087 • Outside Toronto: 1-800-263-1139 • Fax: 944-1803
e-mail: cera@web.net • <http://www.web.net/~cera>

March 16, 2000

Alex Munter
Chairperson
Community Services Committee
111 Lisgar Street;
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 2L7

Sent by FAX
(613) 560-1257

Dear Alex,

The Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation would like to present our resolution on Human Rights to the Community Services Committee at the meeting of April 6th, 2000. As you may recall this resolution was tabled by the committee from the meeting of December 16th 1999.

Attached is a copy of the resolution, if yourself, committee members or staff would like more information please do not hesitate to contact me at (613) 527-5000. Thank you for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,

H. Anderson

per:
Sherric Tingley
Chair

**Draft Resolution on Compliance with International Human Rights Obligations
Presented to the Community Services Committee of the Region of Ottawa-
Carleton by the Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation**

WHEREAS:

Canada has ratified international human rights treaties which place obligations on all levels of government in Canada, including the Region of Ottawa-Carleton; and

The right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food, clothing and housing was a fundamental right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948 and is contained in article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and

At its recent review of Canada the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed growing concern that governments in Canada are violating international human rights, particularly in the area of social assistance benefits; and

Recent reviews of Canada by other United Nations Human Rights Treaty Monitoring Bodies, including the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and the Committee on the Rights of the Child have also identified poverty, homelessness and hunger resulting from social program cuts in Canada as a major area of concern; and

A number of the concerns and recommendations of the United Nations Committees bear on areas of responsibility which lie with the Region; and

The Supreme Court of Canada, in its decision in *Mavis Baker v. Canada* affirmed that administrative discretion must be exercised, where possible, in a manner that is consistent with the provisions of international human rights treaties ratified by Canada;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Region of Ottawa-Carleton affirms its commitment to its human rights obligations and in particular to the right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food, clothing and housing as articulated in international human rights law; and

Requests staff to consult with human rights experts in this area and prepare a memo outlining the Region's obligations under international human rights law, particularly with respect to the right to an adequate standard of living and the right to adequate housing;

Requests staff to review the specific concerns and recommendations of the United Nations Committees as they bear on policies, programs and services administered by the Region and to develop a plan to address these concerns in areas within the Region's jurisdiction and to identify actions needed by other levels of government; and

Requests staff to prepare a memo to all administrators of social assistance, social housing, shelter services and other programs and outlining relevant provisions of international human rights law which should be considered in the exercise of discretion and the development of the Region's policies.