

Bill #83

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**From:** Sheri Lecker [mailto:sheri.lecker@adsumforwomen.org]

**Sent:** May-09-13 2:25 PM

**Subject:** [PROBABLE-SPAM] Bill 83

To the Legislative Standing Committee:

As a member of the Community Coalition to End Poverty - Nova Scotia and executive director of an organization that works daily to provide emergency shelter and short and long term housing to women and families in HRM, I am writing to you with two concerns in Bill 83 : An Act to Amend the Halifax Regional Council Charter:

- 1) the lack of a definition of "affordable housing" and "low and moderate income" in clause 1 a) a) and
- 2) the lack of prior information about the development of this Bill, and of prior consultation on the Bill with those involved in the affordable housing/homelessness/low income advocacy community in HRM, in particular on clause a) (a)

I have communicated with several organizations that could provide some input into this Bill and into this particular clause and yesterday was the first we/they heard about it.

Given busy schedules and lack of notice to people involved in the low income/homelessness/affordable housing sector, it is hardly surprising that you may not have heard from organizations like the one I represent, Adsum for Women & Children. I urge you to delay passage of this Bill until you have consulted with advocates and others most closely affected.

"Affordable housing" is usually defined as 30% of net income spent on housing, but such a definition would not include people on low income unless that is also defined according to the LICO or MBM measures of poverty. Without including such a definition, given market rents in Halifax, "affordable housing" will likely only be available to those on moderate incomes. The definition should also include supportive, subsidized and public housing.

Organizations like Adsum have decades of experience providing housing and supporting individuals and families in getting and maintaining housing in HRM that meets the definition of "affordable housing". We also know a great deal about housing that is not affordable and is out of reach for most of the people we know. It is imperative that this perspective is considered in your debate.

We would appreciate an opportunity to provide input to this proposed Bill.

Yours sincerely,

Sheri Lecker

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Submission was received after the conclusion of the May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting and was distributed to members of the Law Amendments Committee on May 10, 2013.