

Opinion: Montreal Responsible Landlord Certification / Rent Registry

I am concerned this plan risks offloading much of the municipal government's share of responsibility for adequate housing to the private sector. What is to stop landlords from making false or misleading declarations? Are safeguards adequate to prevent this?

Instead of adding more urgently needed housing inspectors, the city is billing landlords what is likely to be a small "certification" fee for inspecting their own buildings every 5 years, and for the most part trusting in the word of landlords that their buildings are safe, clean and in good repair.

When rolling out this plan, if the city must go slow, why not triage the most urgent cases of neglect, of landlords already identified as problem landlords, buildings where complaints have already been received, Montreal's poorest neighbourhoods, those neighbourhoods with the most urgent need for more social housing, and with its most vulnerable tenants?

Some of the wealthiest tenants in Montreal live in buildings of 100 or more units, the first priority group in this plan.

The plan would still be simple if the rent registry was updated every year, instead of the proposed every five years. So many lives, especially the lives of tenants seeking decent affordable rental housing but who cannot find it, can be adversely affected in five years.

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