

**MEDIA RELEASE****Daily Bread Food Bank supports calls for the federal government to include a housing benefit in the upcoming 2017 budget****A housing benefit would help in reducing need for food banks**

(TORONTO, ON — Monday, January 23, 2017) Daily Bread Food Bank, Canada's largest food bank and food distribution hub, announced its support of the National Housing Collaborative's recommendation to institute a housing benefit for renters in the 2017 federal budget. A housing benefit, given directly to a tenant, would help to address the lack of income which drives the need to get emergency food relief from a food bank.

"Working on the frontlines, we see far too often how people are forced to choose between buying food or paying rent," said Gail Nyberg, Executive Director of Daily Bread Food Bank in Toronto. "A housing benefit would go a long way toward helping to make sure that people don't have to make those painful choices."

The financial pressure of housing costs is the key reason for the high demand on Toronto food banks, which saw over 900,000 visits in 2016. Daily Bread's 2016 Who's Hungry report showed that, on average, food bank clients spend 71 per cent of their income on rent and utilities; of those who reported skipping meals to pay for something else, the most commonly cited expense was rent.

"A portable housing benefit helps to address the demand side of affordable housing by increasing tenant incomes," said Richard Matern, Director of Research and Communications at Daily Bread Food Bank. "To maximize its effectiveness in reducing poverty, a federal housing benefit should be one piece of the affordable housing response, in addition to increasing the supply of affordable housing."

**About Daily Bread Food Bank**

Daily Bread Food Bank is an independent, non-profit, charitable organization that is fighting to end hunger in our communities. As Canada's largest food bank, Daily Bread serves people through neighbourhood food banks and meal programs in almost 130 member agencies across Toronto. Daily Bread also works towards long-term solutions to hunger by conducting research, raising public awareness, and running innovative programs to support people on low incomes.

- 30 -

**For more information:**

Richard Matern  
Director, Research and Communications  
T: 416-203-0050 x 288  
M: 416-450-2196  
E: [media@dailybread.ca](mailto:media@dailybread.ca)