


### ~~Referral to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee~~

~~Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee.~~

### ~~MOTION~~

### ~~Referral to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee~~

~~ Hon. SA EMERSON (Indooroopilly—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (12.25 pm): by leave, without notice: I move—~~

~~That the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee, whilst considering the Heavy Vehicle National Law Amendment Bill 2012, also consider the appropriateness of the proposed national penalty regime in Queensland.~~


~~Generally penalties in the heavy vehicle national law appear consistent with the current penalties applicable in Queensland but I want to be sure that the penalties are fair and do not result in an unreasonable burden on the heavy vehicle industry in Queensland.~~

~~Question put—That the motion be agreed to.~~

~~Motion agreed to.~~

## HOUSING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. BS FLEGG** (Moggill—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works) (12.25 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Housing Act 2003, the Building Act 1975 and the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002 for particular purposes, and to make minor amendments of the acts mentioned in the schedule. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Housing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012.

*Tabled paper:* Housing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, explanatory notes.

It is an honour to introduce the Housing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. It has been many years since a Liberal National government has been in a position to progress reforms to the housing assistance system, and, as the House is well aware, these reforms are well overdue.

Over several years, housing ministers from all states and territories have been debating how to arrest the decline of Australia's once proud and robust public housing system. Now is the time for action. Supported by our respective governments, my interstate colleagues and I have taken the decision to embark on what is potentially the biggest reform to the housing assistance system since the state housing commissions were formed across Australia in 1945 to deliver public housing and to contribute to postwar reconstruction and development.

Queensland and other participating jurisdictions have signed an intergovernmental agreement to establish a consistent regulatory environment supporting the growth and development of community housing nationally, with the aim of: improving outcomes for tenants; protecting government funding in social housing; and enhancing the confidence of persons, including investors and financiers, who have dealings with registered providers of community housing.

Unlike some other national systems, the National Regulatory System for Community Housing does not refer any power to the Commonwealth. Each participating jurisdiction implements this system by mirroring or applying the provisions of the model national law as made by the parliament of New South Wales. This bill enacts the national regulatory system in Queensland by mirroring the model national law provisions in the Housing Act 2003.

There is an existing state based registration system under our act; however, it does little to assure government and other investors that providers of community housing are independent, robust and viable businesses. The bill will create a new relationship between the state and providers that is mature, business focused, performance based and delivers real outcomes.

The bill removes the state's existing registration provisions for community housing organisations and replaces them with provisions modelled on the national law. Under these provisions, a community housing registrar is appointed, and makes decisions independent of the minister or the chief executive about the registration and regulation of community housing providers. The registrar's functions and powers include making decisions on the registration of providers, monitoring their performance against a national industry code, taking action on non-compliance and providing information and advice to the minister and the chief executive about the performance of registered providers and the regulated sector.

019 The new legislation will require existing funded community housing providers to maintain registration in order to retain funding and to be eligible for future funding under the act. The registration arrangements established under the bill support the department to maintain the funding relationship with all existing registered providers of community housing.

To maintain this relationship with local government providers, the bill establishes a state register as only non-government entities are eligible for national registration. This is important as many people living in rural and remote areas and within Indigenous communities rely on social housing assistance delivered by Queensland's local governments.

Organisations that have been funded under the act and only deliver ancillary housing services, including crisis accommodation and support services, will no longer be required to retain registration. Upon commencement of the amendment act, existing registration will lapse for providers of ancillary services, significantly reducing the number of prescribed requirements that they will need to meet.

For community housing providers that will need to retain registration, the national regulatory system is an active system. Existing registered community housing providers and new entrants will need to apply for registration and, once registered, continue to demonstrate to the registrar that they are meeting the industry based performance outcomes contained in the National Regulatory Code. This code covers the elements that are critical to the delivery of viable, sustainable and responsive housing services.

Nationally, the system operates on a mutual recognition basis. The registrars appointed in each of the participating jurisdictions will work together to ensure a single national register is maintained and that any providers that operate across borders only report to one registrar.

Implementation arrangements are being coordinated across jurisdictions. The bill provides for a transition period of 18 months starting with the commencement of the amendments for the national regulatory system.

The amendments proposed by this bill ensure that into the future the state will only be doing business with registered providers that operate as part of a national, well-regulated and professional social housing industry. These amendments establish the platform for a significantly expanded role in the provision of housing assistance by registered not-for-profit and local government providers.

Finally, the bill also contains amendments to the Building Act and the Plumbing and Drainage Act that support the notifiable work plumbing approval scheme and make it easier to relocate homes. These reforms will cut red tape and save people both time and money. This will not only benefit the building and plumbing industries but also create real savings that can be passed on to Queenslanders.

The government's proposed changes will also facilitate building certifier and pool safety inspector licence renewals and make minor technical amendments to both acts. Industry has expressed concern about the amount of red tape surrounding relocatable buildings and plumbing approvals. Feedback from the government's advisory bodies, the Building Industry Consultative Group, other industry groups and local governments revealed strong support for these reforms.

Currently, a new building approval is needed where demolition, removal and rebuilding work takes longer than six months. This can cost up to \$500. The changes will allow many applicants to avoid these charges by extending the time frame for this work from six months to one year. Applicants will also be able to obtain an extension of up to six months from their local government.

The notifiable work scheme is already slashing red tape for plumbing approvals. By eliminating the need for a plumbing approval for routine work, competent plumbing professionals are freed from unnecessary local government oversight, cost and delay. This can save up to 28 business days and \$1,000, making this work much easier, quicker and cheaper to complete.

In keeping with the scheme's goal of reducing red tape and complexity, these amendments will clarify that only one notice needs to be lodged for work that is part of a single transaction and clarify who is responsible for lodging the notice. This will help industry continue a smooth transition into the scheme, in turn keeping costs and delays to a minimum for consumers.

As a lot of routine plumbing work no longer undergoes mandatory inspection prior to use, effective audits are important for the notifiable work scheme. These amendments put beyond doubt the Plumbing Industry Council's ability to collect, store and disclose information relating to notifiable work audits. This power is limited to performance of the council's functions under the plumbing act. Local governments will be able to access contact details of property owners for the purpose of auditing notifiable work.

Finally, the amendments provide that a certificate of classification can be issued where notifiable work is undertaken. Previously a compliance certificate was required for plumbing work to be deemed complete, but this will no longer be required in all cases such as where a commercial building has been refurbished.

To remove any doubt, transitional provisions with retrospective effect have been included to address building certifier licensing, pool safety inspector licensing and certificates of classification

issued prior to commencement of the bill. These provisions are entirely beneficial in nature and are supported by the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel and the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. I commend this bill to the House.

### First Reading



**Hon. BS FLEGG** (Moggill—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works) (12.36 pm): I move—  
That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee.

## ~~WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL~~

### Introduction



~~**Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (12.36 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995, the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Environmental Protection (Greentape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012 and the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee to consider the bill.~~

~~Tabled paper: Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012.~~

~~Tabled paper: Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, explanatory notes.~~

~~It is with great delight that I bring this bill to the House today which formally delivers on our election commitment to cut the cost of living for all Queenslanders. We committed from day one when this tax was first proposed to repealing it and we have done just that.~~

~~Introduced in December 2011, Labor's waste tax was another broken promise from a tired government that was desperate for Green preferences in the months before an election. The tax hit Queensland businesses and household budgets at a time when all sectors were struggling in an already overregulated environment. That is why this government made it a priority to scrap the tax, and in July this year we took the first step by reducing the levy rate to zero.~~

~~Completing this repeal involves amendments to the waste act to remove the head of power for a levy and now redundant provisions relating to the calculation, verification and remittance of the tax. In addition, it provides more flexibility around statutory obligations and simplifies the regulatory burden in relation to data reporting requirements. This is just another demonstration that this government is committed to freeing metropolitan and regional Queensland communities of cumbersome red tape.~~

~~Further, this bill seeks to amend the Environmental Protection (Greentape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012. The amendments in this bill will ensure clear and consistent drafting and a smooth transition to the new system introduced by this act in July 2012 and due to commence in March 2013.~~

~~The extra amendments will allow additional flexibility. For example, an operator will be able to suspend their operations in circumstances where it is not viable to continue in the short term and when there are no ongoing environmental management issues. This will be particularly important to operators in the intensive agricultural sector where volatile market prices quickly impact on this core Queensland industry. This is a strong contribution to ensuring that we are supporting the growth of a four pillar economy especially in times of economic hardship.~~

~~This bill also introduces further transitional amendments to continue the effect of existing codes of environmental compliance until they are re-made by my department and to ensure that operators who have surrendered their registration certificates in circumstances where they had suspended, but not abandoned, the activity can apply to suspend the environmental authority.~~

~~Other amendments include the introduction of a new offence where tenure is transferred automatically under the resources legislation and the tenure holder does not become a registered suitable operator before carrying out the activities. This amendment is consequential to the amendments introduced by the Mines Legislation (Streamlining) Amendment Act 2012 for non-~~