

Mrs. Noreen Weeks

19 September 19, 2012

The Research Director  
Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane. Qld 4000

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a resident of [REDACTED] Buderim. This village has both Low Care and High Care attached. Entry to the village is by purchasing a "licence to occupy" with a 70+ years entry age.

As it is at present, the Retirement Villages Act, 1999 appears to be very biased towards the scheme provider. Having had almost 15 years experience with Body Corporate situations under strata title, I feel the issue of the question of "owner" or "renter" needs to be resolved and then many other anomalies may be easier to rectify.

The owner/ renter as at September 2012:--

When one holds a licence to occupy a unit in a Retirement Village is one considered an owner or a renter?

- Centerlink says " If you paid less than \$139,500 you can get rent assistance". This makes you a renter.
- If you paid a higher price for the licence, no rent assistance is available so therefore one is an owner. This is discrimination.
- During last years Census, the question on the form was  
Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Renter \_\_\_\_\_

The main Census Bureau telephone service could not answer this question regarding my situation.

- The Local Government Authorities Act do not acknowledge Retirement Village Residents as owners to give Subsidy Rebates. Living in a Village where the entry age is 70+ years old our requests for Pensioner Water Subsidy was not given any recognition by Hon Tracy Davis MP  
Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. The term "Senior Citizens Water Subsidy Scheme" would be a more appropriate title.  
Note. I pay full general rates and charges and water rates and charges through my monthly General Service Charge.

#### Budgets.

The legislation around Budgets and their management needs to look more favourably toward the resident/ customer. While I have outlaid a similar amount to purchase the licence to occupy as I would to purchase a strata title unit of similar size and characteristics, I do not have the same legal input, supervision and management transparency rights in GSC and MRF budget and transactions as I would have in a Body Corporate Management and Sinking Funds situation.

While I may have the opportunity to discuss issues in a draft budget, I am not given the right to vote on the proposed budget before it is adopted. Scheme operators can make changes in between these two steps. Attempts to seek clarification are ignored or at best very very weak.

#### Communication Blackholes.

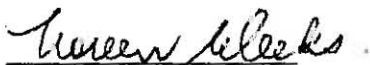
Legislation needs to be introduced to stop Scheme operators ignoring residents by the lack of open two way communication. All correspondence to Scheme Operators from residents must be acknowledged and responded to within a maximum time frame. Silence does not develop a healthy quality of Life Style nor develop a positive Resident/ Scheme Operator relationship. Seniors may have aged but they should not be abused and discriminated.

#### Finance Distribution and Management Transparency.

- The legislation needs more specific details in its disclosure of the income and expenditure statements in their relation to budgets.
- Legislation required for:- Disclosure of the relationship ( financial and other) between the Retirement Village Act and the Non for Profit Scheme Operators. At present there appears to be a " large grey area" between the non for profit scheme operators and the Retirement Village residents i.e. their customers.
- Need clarity towards the accountability of the money paid for the Licence to occupy plus the interest gained on such investment to be transparent to all unit residents.
- Scheme Operators need to exhibit a greater division or separation between the Aged Care Services and the Retirement Village services within the same complex. Retirement Village residents do not want to be treated in the same way as those under the Federal Aged Care Act.

Trusting this submission may have a positive contribution to your review,

Yours sincerely,



Noreen Weeks.