




Speech By
Steve Minnikin

MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH

HOUSING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (3.19 pm): I rise to speak to the Housing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. At the outset I commend the Minister for Housing and Public Works, the Hon. Tim Mander, for bringing this amendment bill to the House. I also acknowledge the work initially undertaken by the member for Moggill. I congratulate them both.

This amendment bill will make changes to the Housing Act 2003 which are desperately needed in this great state of Queensland. The first major change that this amendment bill will introduce is consistent regulation in the not-for-profit community housing sector. Supporting the amendments that this bill will make enables Queensland, along with other states and territories and the Commonwealth, to partake in a national regulatory system when it comes to providing community housing. This intergovernmental agreement means that Queensland will adopt a system that aligns with the national model law. What does this mean? It means consistency, which Queenslanders did not see much of until about a year ago. This government, in which I am proud to represent the good people of Chatsworth, is about delivering consistency for all Queenslanders.

What will this new national regulatory system bring for my constituents in Chatsworth who benefit from community housing? It brings regulation that is consistent in supporting growth and development for not-for-profit community housing organisations. Furthermore, it provides opportunities for regulated participation in providing social housing whilst reducing the red tape associated with community housing providers dealing across different states and levels of government. These are all things that the Newman government is committed to providing—making it easier to prosper, cutting the red tape and, most importantly, providing opportunity for all stakeholders. Unlike those seven ALP members sitting across the chamber—correction, make that two—we are making getting things done easier. We are ensuring that it is easier for community housing providers to seek new opportunities with other participating states and territories.

What will the Housing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 mean for most tenants who utilise community housing? It will ensure tenants get results and provide protection for vulnerable tenants who use this vital service that we call community housing. The Housing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 provides a future and protection for current and potential stakeholders in the social and affordable housing sector. It will mean that confidence will be heightened for people who may look to invest in community housing providers. However, even though all of the things I have just mentioned are paramount in providing efficient and effective social housing, it further drives what the Housing Act 2003 was enacted for: improving accessibility for Queenslanders to safe, secure and needs-appropriate housing.

I support the Housing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I am proud to stand here today and say why. With this national approach being taken, a register will be formulated that will become a national record of all social housing providers. Again that word 'consistency' comes to mind. The Housing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 will allow a chief executive to appoint a registrar who will make independent decisions on registration and performance and in some cases

take action in relation to providers who are not complying with legislation. The appointment of a registrar will ensure Queenslanders will continue to be provided with safe and accessible housing when they need it most. It gives stakeholders who may consider investing in community housing confidence that it will be administered properly and consistently.

Hopefully now that I have mentioned that word 'consistently' a couple of times, the ALP might take a note of what they failed to do over the past 20 years, when they were in charge of Queensland housing. The Newman government is committed to ensuring that all Queenslanders are represented, especially the vulnerable who look to government to ensure they have access to housing that meets their needs. This national regulatory system will provide all stakeholders with a sense of confidence that good governance will prevail across-the-board when it comes to community housing. It is about delivering sustainability and a high standard of quality when it comes to building and maintaining community housing dwellings. Over the last two decades public money has been given out here, there and everywhere without any accountability or—let me say it again—consistency.

This bill will allow for a transition period. There will be time allowed for existing providers to make an application for national registration to ensure that funding that is allowed under the Housing Act 2003 will continue. However, funding arrangements will not continue if providers are not proactive in obtaining national registration.

Unlike the ALP, we have a plan for the future of community housing—to ensure that not-for-profit providers are able to get their job done with direction and clear guidance. In the past 20 years these organisations have been just given a pot of money without any guidelines about the best way to spend this money and to ensure the best interests of Queenslanders are met. I have a very good suggestion to make to the member for Bundamba: with the CD she may want to take a remedial economics course, because the legacy of the previous government on this particular issue is absolutely disgraceful and diabolical. Any reference to the 30,000 people on the waiting list is all anyone needs to have their attention drawn to.

I am proud to be a part of a government that is looking to the future—setting out a very clear direction, especially in the not-for-profit housing sector. That is why I stand here in the House proud to support the Housing and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. I thoroughly commend this bill to the House.