




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 25 October 2017

HOUSING LEGISLATION (BUILDING BETTER FUTURES) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (5.01 pm): I am pleased to rise in support of this important piece of legislation. These long, overdue amendments will provide much needed protections for residents of retirement villages, manufactured homes and residential services. These amendments will support vulnerable Queenslanders and bring some much needed transparency to this sector. It is a particularly fantastic result for our seniors who can now feel more secure in their homes. These amendments will increase transparency and fairness in the relationship between park owners and home owners and strengthen consumer protections to provide more confidence to home owners. These amendments strengthen consumer protections and give more rights and power back to our home owners.

I particularly commend the amendments to the Manufactured Home (Residential Parks) Act. Around 25,000 Queenslanders now live in manufactured homes. In my own electorate there are 1,103 manufactured homes. I know from listening to many of these residents that they have felt vulnerable and exploited under the current legislation. These residents came to me upset as unforeseen additional site fees had left them struggling to live off their fixed incomes: their pensions. They came to me concerned for their safety as ambulances were unable to access their homes. I am proud today to be supporting amendments that address these issues. I am so proud to stand up today as part of a Palaszczuk Labor government in support of our seniors.

These amendments include limitations on rental increases, prohibiting additional fees around utilities and meter readings, behavioural standards for park owners, a new staged precontractual disclosure process—so important—and safeguards to ensure emergency services and health workers have access to our residential parks. They also provide opportunities for issues and disputes to be resolved without engaging the formal tribunal system. These are such important changes that will give more power back to our home owners, creating a fairer system.

I particularly acknowledge the work of my community of Waterford and all they have done in the campaign for these amendments. This is a win for all of the residents of Palm Lake Resort, Regal Waters, River Glen Haven and Active Lifestyles Bethania who joined me and Minister de Brenni at multiple community forums to discuss the issues facing residents of manufactured home parks. I want to thank the minister and his department for their commitment to listening and supporting residents in my electorate.

One of the first events the minister, the member for Springwood, attended in his role as the Minister for Housing was a community forum at the Bethania Community Centre to hear from residents about the exploitation they faced under the current legislation. He promised them that the Palaszczuk government would deliver much needed reform to improve the rights of home owners and today I am proud to join him in support of this legislation.

I acknowledge the work and perseverance of Beryl Dwyer, Paul Miller, Noel Wright and many others in my electorate for their role in campaigning for these amendments. This is important legislation that will support vulnerable Queenslanders and, importantly, gives more power to home owners. I commend the bill to the House.