




Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

Record of Proceedings, 18 August 2022

ADJOURNMENT

Sri, Councillor J, Housing

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (6.09 pm): I rise to speak on a matter that, like most Queenslanders, I find absolutely shocking. At a time of unprecedented pressure on the housing market, Brisbane City Councillor Sri and the Greens political party are advocating for people to break in and squat in homes across the inner city. That is simply irresponsible.

As I am sure the councillor knows, there are a broad range of reasons that properties may not be occupied. Queenslanders have had to endure over two years of COVID impacts, multiple flooding events and the rising cost of living. If Councillor Sri gets his way, residents who have temporarily relocated during flood recovery will be coming home to people squatting in their living rooms. The same could happen to somebody who is away from their home seeking treatment in a hospital or visiting a sick loved one. The Greens political party is all headlines and no substance. If they were serious about housing solutions for their constituents, they would work with the Palaszczuk Labor government on rolling out our record \$2.9 billion social and affordable housing investment.

It is frankly disturbing that the councillor for the Gabba ward, who is from the same Greens political party as the member for Maiwar and the member for South Brisbane, is actively promoting places where people will, and I quote Councillor Sri, 'be able to find a suitable place to squat'. An elected member using their position of privilege to incite people to break the law is absolutely reprehensible. The suggestion by the councillor that vulnerable people put themselves in a situation where they may be criminalised for squatting in someone else's house is not only ridiculous but also, quite frankly, negligent.

The member for Maiwar and the member for South Brisbane, the representatives of the Greens political party in this place, should immediately make clear their position on this matter. What a slap in the face this is to their own constituents who have had their properties impacted by multiple flooding events and some of whom are still dealing with major rebuilds. Do the Greens members support the outrageous statements by Councillor Sri? Do they encourage illegal activity and illegal squatting?

Instead, they should be supporting sensible policy like the Palaszczuk government's Help to Home initiative. We are calling on home owners to make their properties available to rent to help support Queenslanders who are struggling to find a home. This is part of our \$40 million Help to Home initiative that will see us deliver up to 1,000 housing solutions through headlease private market properties. Help to Home is a win-win for property owners and tenants. It will help people on our social housing register to secure safe and affordable housing in target areas of high demand. This is a sensible way to manage housing in this state. Encouraging people to break in and squat in people's homes is not. That is absolutely ridiculous and the Greens need to stand up right now and denounce it.