




Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

Record of Proceedings, 8 November 2022

**BUILDING UNITS AND GROUP TITLES AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (12.53 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Building Units and Group Titles and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. In doing so, I want to acknowledge the great work of the Attorney-General and the committee which brought this forward. I also want to acknowledge the residents and the representatives of Couran Cove, some of whom join us today, for their great advocacy in this space.

As we have heard before, the overall objective of the bill is to improve the operation of the Building Units and Group Titles Act and the Mixed Use Development Act. The focus of the legislation is to make body corporate governance arrangements fairer and more transparent for proprietors such as unit owners. This bill also adds to the Palaszczuk government's reform agenda for growing our community titles sector and will deliver a suite of modern and more streamlined laws governing corporate bodies in Queensland. All Queenslanders who own units in community title schemes should enjoy the same rights and protections regardless of the legislative framework that the property is governed by.

The Building Units and Group Titles and Other Legislation Amendment Bill bridges the gap between the protections and support that unit owners and community title schemes under body corporate legislation enjoy that those in older schemes managed under the Building Units and Group Titles Act and the Mixed Use Development Act do not. The amendments proposed in the bill will make governance arrangements in these older schemes fairer for unit owners, and of course fairness underscores everything we do on this side of the House. The reforms will also facilitate easier access to government information and support and provide more accessible and flexible processes to help unit owners resolve disputes. It will be clearer for unit owners or Queenslanders considering purchasing a unit in a community title scheme what they can expect from the body corporate, including that corporate bodies will act reasonably, ensure continuity of essential utility services where it has undertaken to do so and are obligated to take action to remain financially viable. Ensuring all unit owners can access government information and education to assist them understand and manage their investment in a community titles scheme will help to make purchasing a unit in an older scheme more attractive and easier to manage.

Encouraging and supporting investment in community titles schemes will help Queenslanders access safe, secure and affordable housing. The reforms proposed in the bill broaden and enhance protections for unit owners in older community title schemes who have fallen behind and not benefited from the incremental improvements delivered by the body corporate act. This could help reduce the financial and emotional stress experienced by some unit owners in community title schemes by making bodies corporate more transparent and accountable for their activities and decisions and providing more flexible, accessible dispute resolution processes to help unit owners and bodies corporate resolve issues.

The Palaszczuk government is focused on delivering better protections for Queenslanders right across the housing continuum. Through the Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025, we have also committed to key reforms with respect to retirement villages and manufactured homes and strengthening tenancy laws to provide greater certainty and security for Queenslanders. This important work builds on key protections delivered as a result of our stage 1 rental reforms that commenced last month. The first stage of the Palaszczuk government's rental law reform strengthened laws to ensure safety, security and certainty for Queensland renters by: ending without-grounds eviction and providing appropriate approved reasons to end a tenancy; making it easier for renters to have a pet; ensuring renters have confidence that their rental property is safe, secure and functional by prescribing minimum housing standards; and ensuring people experiencing domestic and family violence have options to end a tenancy quickly and with limited end-of-lease costs.

All of this came into effect on 1 October this year and we are using a staggered approach for other elements regarding those things that I have just mentioned. The department is working closely with key stakeholders to ensure all parties understand their rights and responsibilities under these stage 1 reforms. I mention all of this because it is about ensuring that we have fair processes in place right across the housing continuum. On top of that, we are ensuring that we are building more social and affordable homes. As has been mentioned in this House many times, we are investing a new record \$3.9 billion in social and affordable housing in Queensland. That will mean that, since coming to office in 2015, the Palaszczuk government across a number of programs will have commenced more than 13,000 social and affordable homes by 2027. We are very much focused on delivering an increased supply of social and affordable housing through that investment, partnering with the community housing sector, private industry and members of the community.

Overall, these key housing reforms, including the Building Units and Group Titles and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, make it easier for Queenslanders across the housing spectrum, whether they be renters, landlords, investors, home owners or retirees, and contribute to housing stability and security for all Queenslanders. I want to once again acknowledge all of the work of the committee and the Attorney-General for bringing forward this bill and acknowledge all of those residents and representatives of various locations across Queensland who will benefit from the changes in this bill. I commend the bill to the House.