




Speech By
Cynthia Lui

MEMBER FOR COOK

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HOUSING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (12.28 pm): I rise today to speak on the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The bill was introduced to the Legislative Assembly and referred to the committee on 27 October 2022. The committee invited stakeholders and subscribers to make submissions on the bill, with almost 900 submissions received. From the outset I acknowledge the Minister for Housing, Leeanne Enoch, for her ongoing work to strengthen the housing market in Queensland; the chair of the Community Support and Services Committee, Corrine McMillan; members of the committee; the committee secretariat; and Hansard for their hard work in the examination of the bill. The committee made nine recommendations and recommended that the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill be passed.

According to 2022 figures from the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, over 50,000 people moved to Queensland from other states. Largely driven by the COVID pandemic, the mass migration of people to Queensland has put unprecedented pressures on the private rental market and impacted social housing. There is no denying that since the COVID pandemic the housing issue in Queensland has become very complex, factoring in unprecedented population migration, rising house prices, limited land availability, record low rental vacancies, building supply issues, labour shortages and so on.

There is no quick fix to the housing problem we are experiencing in Queensland and I applaud the Palaszczuk government for pulling out all stops to address the housing shortage in this state. The Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027 sets a 10-year framework for driving key reforms and targeted investment across the housing continuum to ensure Queenslanders have access to safe and affordable housing. The Housing Strategy aims to ensure confidence in the housing market, consumers are protected and the housing legislation framework is reformed and modernised.

The Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 helps meet the objectives of the Housing Strategy by assisting to boost the supply of social and affordable housing and increase private sector investment into the Queensland economy through enabling the Homes for Homes donation deed model in Queensland and maintaining public confidence in the retirement village industry by increasing consumer protections and reforming the legislative framework for improved transparency, accountability and consistency of financial reporting in retirement villages.

One of the policy objectives of the bill is to amend legislation to support the establishment and operation of the Homes for Homes donation deed model in Queensland. Homes for Homes is an independent not-for-profit company that raises funds to provide social and affordable housing through people making tax deductible donations from the sale of their property. Established by the social enterprise the Big Issue, Homes for Homes is operational in all Australian states and territories. Support for the Homes for Homes initiative is consistent with the Housing Strategy objective of boosting the supply of affordable housing.

The second policy objective of the bill is focused on improving financial reporting in Queensland retirement villages. The policy objectives of the bill in relation to retirement villages are to: address limitations in the Retirement Villages Act's existing provisions and regulation-making power for achieving the policy goal of more transparent, accountable and consistent financial reporting; improve financial transparency of village operations by increasing access to finance documents; and strengthen public confidence in a financially transparent and accountable retirement village industry.

The Retirement Villages Act establishes the regulatory framework for the operation of retirement village schemes in Queensland. The Retirement Villages Act places obligations on scheme operators for keeping village funds for general services, maintenance and capital replacement, fund budgets and related quantity surveyor reports, quarterly financial statements, audited and financial statements and audited reports. Issues about financial transparency and accountability constitute a high volume of village resident complaints made to the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy as well as compliance work with operators and disputes brought under the Retirement Villages Act, including through the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

This is a good bill. It brings fairness to residents and resident committees, supporting peace of mind whilst encouraging rights to information, consultation and some decision-making processes. I fully support the amendments in this bill. It is absolutely necessary and aligns with the Queensland Housing Strategy to address the ongoing housing need and demand in this state. I commend the bill to the House.