




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BONNEY

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**RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AND ROOMING ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; MANUFACTURED HOMES (RESIDENTIAL
PARKS) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (8.19 pm): After our state being governed for 30 of the last 35 years by the Labor Party, we are in a housing crisis the likes of which Queensland has never seen. It has never been tougher for people in our state to put a roof over their heads. We are not opposing either of these bills—every little bit will count—but there are concerns which have been and should be raised about this government's approach and how it is the main contributor to the housing crisis so many are experiencing.

I will start with some comments on the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill because I have many renters in the great electorate of Bonney, particularly in suburbs like Labrador, Biggera Waters and a big part of Arundel as well. I think we do have to consider the chance that this could put rents up further by further decreasing the desire for people to invest in property. Rentals are, of course, an important part of a healthy housing market. When you have thought bubbles or kneejerk changes in policy like we have seen from this government, it really limits the pool of rental properties that are available.

In the Liberal National Party we welcome people investing in property because most of these investors are everyday Queenslanders. The overwhelming majority, I would say, are everyday Queenslanders. They are not people to be demonised. They are an essential part of our property market in supplying houses for Queenslanders. We need to be very careful to not hurt investor confidence and to limit the choice that renters have as well for their payment options like limiting up-front payments which I believe some amendments to be moved will address. Queenslanders have already experienced the worst rental increases in the nation.

Supply has clearly not kept up with demand. Today, as other speakers, in particular the member for Glass House, have mentioned, we saw another devastating blow for housing supply in our state with news that AV Jennings is not proceeding with its plans for 3,500 affordable homes in Caboolture West, finding it so difficult to develop that they even copped a fine of \$17.2 million in the process. The City of Moreton Bay Mayor, Peter Flannery, said a key reason this development is not proceeding is because the state government have not prioritised a pipeline of catalytic infrastructure, further saying that it is all well and good for the state to mandate growth targets for councils but that they need to support that growth. If the minister had not been so obsessed with calling in a bad development in my community for 350 luxury homes on sport and recreation land at Arundel Hills and instead focused on how she could have supported this proposal for 3,500 affordable homes in the key growth area, our state would have been much better off.

There are also no details before us on how the portable bond scheme will work in practice, or on the code of conduct or the home modification framework. The code of conduct, of course, was something so vital that it has taken a decade to be reinstated.

The supposed ban on rent bidding was outlined by several submitters to be already banned under existing legislation as well. However, I will say the privacy provisions for renters are reasonable—that is, the extended notice period from 24 to 48 hours for entry, other than for general inspections; the prescribing of a rental application forming categories of supporting documentation to limit the information that can be requested of prospective renters; and requiring that personal information of renters must be securely sought and disposed of within three months of an unsuccessful rental application or three years after a tenancy ends. I think those are perfectly reasonable.

I will make some comments as well about the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Amendment Bill because I am proud to represent four of these communities in my electorate. I firstly mention the Pine Ridge Caravan Village in Coombabah. I want to particularly acknowledge Colleen Marney who was standing in as the president of the home owners committee before it was disbanded. It is very hard to get people to step up into those roles. Many people in this community of Pine Ridge have a disability or they live on the age pension, so they are particularly concerned about rent rises that could occur when inflation drops below 3.5 per cent.

I have written to the department a number of times about concerns from residents in this community. It is clear to me that the regulatory services unit in the department is under-resourced. It struggles to take enforcement action where it needs to. I have also heard from residents there that Caxton Legal Centre do a great job supporting them and going in to bat for these residents, but they can really only do so much and they really do struggle to match the resourcing of the owners of parks like this when they attempt to take action against unfair and potentially illegal behaviour. Experiences like this are why it is disappointing that these laws are a missed opportunity to modernise the manufactured homes legislation, especially around conflict resolution and conflict within parks and financial accountability and transparency.

I also want to acknowledge Seachange Arundel, my largest community of this type in my electorate, particularly their president Alan Henderson, their vice-president Chris Lambert, their secretary Chris Rogers, their treasurer Bill Cohen and members Val Holbrook, Phil Gutteridge, Rena Anderson and David Chick. I want to thank all those members for the outstanding job they do advocating for the almost 700 residents in what is a special little community there in Arundel. The concerns that they have are around Seachange being sold potentially at any time and the lack of security that comes with that and the potential these laws give for unfair price increases once again. They are concerned that this does not provide what the government themselves say this is for—to provide greater clarity and predictability for home owners.

I also want to acknowledge everyone else in my electorate at the Harbourside Gardens lifestyle resort in Biggera Waters and Settlers Village in Coombabah.

The caps included in this will stop some of the outrageous price rises we have heard members talk about from occurring. They will limit the bases which can be used to increase site rent. Those are good things, but I do acknowledge those concerns about when the CPI is below 3.5 per cent. I think that is something which a lot of Queenslanders still will not be reassured by through this legislation.

To wrap-up, this is overall just tinkering around the edges. It is some trumped-up changes to give Queensland renters false hope that this decade-old government is taking the housing crisis that they are largely responsible for seriously. What we really need to see is meaningful action to address the housing crisis in our state. That will only come with change and—

Government members interjected.

Mr O'CONNOR:—they are waiting for it! The only way that is going to occur is if we show Labor the door in October 2024.