



**tenants** queensland inc  
TENANTS WORKING

18<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs

Dear Committee Secretary

**Re: Submission to the Economics Legislation Committee Review of the Provisions of the Treasury Laws Amendment (National Housing and Homelessness Agreement) Bill 2017**

Established in 1986, Tenants Queensland is a statewide community and legal service providing free tenant advisory services for residential tenants. TQ aims to protect and improve the rights of all people who rent their home in Queensland. This includes renters in private rental accommodation or social housing and renters in marginal tenures such as caravan parks and boarding houses.

TQ is the lead provider in the newly developed Queensland Statewide Tenant's Advice and Referral Service (QSTARS) program initiated by the Queensland Government in October 2015. QSTARS provides quality, free, independent advisory services to tenants across Queensland. Through QSTARS and our Community Legal Centre's Program work, TQ assists renters to understand and exercise their legislative rights and responsibilities, and ultimately to manage and sustain their tenancies. TQ operates a statewide telephone advice service and provides training, information, support, community education materials and specialist advice in tenancy related legislation to support services throughout the state.

TQ has been at the forefront of tenancy law reform and policy development since its establishment. In addition to advice services, TQ conducts research into a range of tenancy issues and contributes to the development of legislation and policy in Queensland and nationally.

Tenants Queensland welcomes the opportunity to provide input into the proposed amendment to the Bill.

In response to the call for submissions to the Bill, Tenants Queensland is in support of National Shelter's submission. The key points being:

- 1. The NHHA legislation should include the development of a National Housing Strategy and Plan leading and complemented by State and territory plans.**
- 2. There should be no triggers to reduce or cease the flow of funds to states.**

---

**STATEWIDE**

Level 1, 87 Wickham Tce, SPRING HILL Q 4000  
ph **3832 9447** fax 3910 1108  
[www.tenantsqld.org.au](http://www.tenantsqld.org.au) mail@tenantsqld.org.au

**tenancy advice statewide:**

ph 1300 744 263  
Mon Thurs Fri 9am – 5pm  
Tues & Wed 9am – 7pm

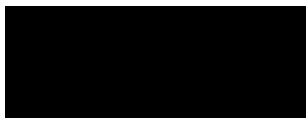
- 3. Funding for homelessness, social and affordable housing should be discretely identified so it may be tracked to ensure no decreases in revenue flows to homelessness services or social and affordable housing.**
- 4. Funding from the Commonwealth should be increased with the new money used to negotiate any additional outcomes from states.**
- 5. Development of bi-laterals which can recognise the different conditions and social housing levels in each state and territory.**
- 6. Inclusion in the NHHA of a mechanism to ensure transparency of the cost of the social housing system currently obscured by state budget and systems reporting.**
- 7. Delay the date for commencement to December 2018**

Further to National Shelters first point that calls for the NHHA legislation to include continuing commonwealth leadership to ensure the development of a National Housing Strategy and Plan leading and complemented by State and Territory Plans, Tenants Queensland calls for commonwealth leadership to promulgate:

- minimum standards in rental housing to ensure renting in private rental is secure and attractive so as to reduce the pressure on social housing demand; and
- social housing providers be required to provide reasons for eviction as a means of preventing unnecessary 'churn' by tenants in the private rental market; reducing the risk of homelessness and to improve policy and procedural transparency.

We look forward to the Committee's final deliberations.

Yours sincerely



Penny Carr  
CEO