



10 November 2024

To the Minister for Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs
Parliament House
Hobart TAS 7000

via email: felix.ellis@parliament.tas.gov.au

To the Honourable Felix Ellis MP

Re: Further Consultation on Residential Tenancy Amendment Bill 2024

On 20 June 2024 your Government tabled the *Residential Tenancy Amendment Bill 2024* in the House of Assembly. The Bill was the culmination of an election commitment made during the March 2024 State Election in which you made the following promise:¹

Changing the laws to allow renters to have a pet, as a right

The Tasmanian Liberals recognise how important it is for people to have their pets and understand that many tenants rely on the comfort and companionship of their animals, particularly for their mental health and wellbeing.

A re-elected majority Liberal Government will change the laws to allow renters to keep a pet, as a right.

We will immediately amend the Residential Tenancy Act 1997 to ensure Tasmanian renters can keep their treasured family pet living with them.

Under these changes, landlords will only be able to refuse a pet if they have permission from the TASCAT.

The changes also mean landlords will not be permitted to unreasonably reject applications from prospective tenants, on the basis that they'll be accompanied by

¹ Tasmanian Liberals, 'Unlocking more affordable rentals for Tasmanians – Strong Plan for Tasmanian Renters'. As found at <https://tas.liberal.org.au/unlocking-more-affordable-rentals-tasmanians-strong-plan-tasmanian-renters> (accessed 10 November 2024).

a pet. The only reasonable grounds for refusal would be pets causing a nuisance, damaging the property or endangering the safety of neighbours, as determined by TASCAT.

Given the current pressures facing renters, we are committing to tabling enabling legislation in the first 100 days of a re-elected majority Liberal Government.

Following your election victory, and as promised, you did introduce the Bill within 100 days of being elected. However, before the Bill could be debated, a motion moved by the Honourable Rebekah Pentland MP and passed by the majority of the House of Assembly requested “further consultation with all stakeholders” and that “all relevant stakeholders and interested parties have the opportunity to inform the proposed reforms and forthcoming debate”.²

The motion was passed more than three months ago and yet no consultation has taken place with any of us. We are very concerned that your Government may be considering amendments to the Bill that would not be in keeping with the election commitment promised.

As a matter of urgency, we request a meeting and a reassurance that you intend to follow through with your election commitment.

Yours faithfully,



Benedict Bartl
Principal Solicitor
Tenants' Union of Tasmania



Adrienne Picone
Chief Executive Officer
Tasmanian Council of Social Service Inc



Kim Bomford
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Shelter Tas



Mark Wild
Chief Executive Officer
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Andrea Dawkins
Chief Executive Officer
RSPCA Tasmania

² Tasmanian Parliament, *Hansard*, House of Assembly (7 August 2024).

