



Jeremy Rockliff

Liberal Member for **Braddon**
Premier of **Tasmania**



15 March 2024

Mr Ben Bartl
Principal Solicitor
Tenants' Union of Tasmania Inc
By Email: ben@tenantstas.org.au

Dear Mr Bartl

Thank you for writing to me with the Tenants' Union of Tasmania's election questionnaire. I am pleased to respond on behalf of all Liberal members and candidates.

An important part of our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future is to make life easier for Tasmanian renters. A re-elected majority Liberal Government will:

- Change the laws to allow renters to keep a pet, as a right;
- Unlock more affordable rentals by boosting our Private Rental Incentive Scheme, with an additional 200 homes; and
- 100% land tax incentives for property owners who build to rent, or switch a short stay home to long term rental.

In relation to your specific questions, I am pleased to provide the following answers.

**Do you commit to building more public housing properties during the next term of Government?
If so, how many?**

A re-elected majority Liberal Government will deliver 10,000 more social and affordable homes by 2032 and set a 'social housing only' target of 2000 more homes by 30 June 2027.

Will you commit to repealing no reason end of lease evictions?

I am advised that the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997* already offers protections to tenants, including in relation to no-cause evictions.

Will you introduce rent control measures?

I am advised that the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997* offers protections against unreasonable rent increases, including providing the tenant with the right to apply to the Residential Tenancy Commissioner for an order declaring the rent increase unreasonable.

Will you support amendments to the Act to allow for standard residential lease agreements and a standard application form?

A re-elected majority Liberal Government has no plans to amend the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997* to allow standard agreements and forms.

Jeremy Rockliff MP | Liberal Member for Braddon, Premier of Tasmania

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Do you support amending the Act to allow pets in rentals unless there is a good reason for their exclusion?

Under our Strong Plan 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 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.

Will you strengthen minimum standards and energy efficiency standards?

I am advised that new construction of residential buildings, extensions and additions to existing homes must already achieve a minimum six-star rating in Tasmania.

My Government is partnering with the Australian Government to deliver long-term cost of living savings to more than 1,600 Tasmanian households, through our \$16.6 million partnership for energy upgrades in social housing properties. We are also delivering:

- The \$65 million Tasmanian Energy Efficiency Loans Scheme (TEELS) for interest-free loans to purchase energy efficient products for households and small businesses.
- No Interest Loan Scheme's Energy Saver Loan and Subsidy Scheme with funding of \$2 million.

Do you support amending the Act to allow minor modifications to be made?

The Liberals believe that the current provisions of the Act provide the right balance between allowing a tenant to personalise their property and ensuring that the condition of the property is maintained.

Will you support stronger regulation of the short-term accommodation sector in Tasmania?

The Liberal Party is a strong supporter of the rights of Tasmanians to use their homes to generate income through either short or long stay rental, and we have no intention of curtailing that right with policies such as arbitrary and unfair caps.

Rather, a re-elected majority Liberal Government will introduce a five per cent levy on short stay accommodation, with 100 per cent of the levy going directly to assisting first home buyers to buy their first home.

Will you support a funding increase of \$95,000 so that we can improve service delivery in Tasmania's North-West?

The Liberals are committed to supporting vulnerable Tasmanians in need, to access timely information about their legal rights and protections in community settings.

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Since 2021, the Liberal Government has provided \$2.2 million per year over four years to the Legal Assistance Sector, which includes the Tenants' Union of Tasmania. In 2023, we extended this funding further, providing funding for an additional year until 30 June 2026.

Under our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future, a re-elected majority Liberal Government will also:

- Deliver 10,000 more social and affordable homes by 2032;
- Set a new 'social housing only' target of 2000 more homes by 30 June 2027;
- Deliver up to 100 more homes for women and children escaping family violence;
- Unlock more affordable rentals by boosting our Private Rental Incentive Scheme, with an additional 200 homes;
- Establish Key Development Coaches in Safe Space facilities in each region;
- Support women and children at risk of, or experiencing homelessness;
- Deliver energy efficiency in social housing;
- Provide increased funding to Shelter Tasmania; and
- Deliver more funding for social housing maintenance and upgrades.

Another important part of our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future is to continue to deliver immediate cost-of living relief measures.

A re-elected majority Liberal Government will supercharge this year's Renewable Energy Dividend to deliver a one-off \$250 dividend to Tasmanian households on their energy bills, to be credited to Tasmanians this financial year.

Under our 2030 Strong Plan we will also deliver immediate cost of living support to Tasmanians by halving the cost of bus fares and Derwent Ferry fares.

This measure will apply to all operators: school buses, general access buses and ferries, and across all fare types: adult, concession and students, delivering thousands of dollars daily in immediate relief to Tasmanians.

Half price fares will be implemented from 1 June 2024 until 30 June 2025, connecting Tasmanians right across the State.

Thank you again for your correspondence. For more information on our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future please visit www.tas.liberal.org.au/our-plan.

Yours sincerely



Jeremy Rockliff MP
Premier