



The Honourable David Speirs MP  
Leader of the Liberal Party

Dear Mr Philpott,

### **Changes to the Residential Tenancies Act**

You may be aware of significant changes to the Residential Tenancies Act that are being proposed by the Malinauskas Labor Government.

These changes are aimed at providing more protection and rights to tenants and while tenant rights are of course important, I am concerned about their impact on property owners and potential unintended consequences which could actually make our current housing crisis even worse.

Some of the key proposed changes are:

#### **Banning no-fault lease terminations**

This will limit general freedoms around how you can end a lease, requiring property owners to stipulate a reason for doing so. This reason will be restricted to selling a property, undertaking a significant renovation, or moving into the property. While the allowable reasons for ending a lease appear broad, the very move in this direction is a worrying encroachment on the principle of private property rights.

#### **Introduction of new regulations governing pets in rental properties**

Many landlords allow pets to be kept by their tenants. This is a normal part of negotiating the terms of a rental property. However, the Labor Government wants to compel landlords to take pets regardless of the appropriateness of doing so. Many properties are suitable for pets, but some, such as small apartments and newly built properties could be deemed as not being appropriate for certain animals to occupy. This is again a fundamental undermining of private property rights and one that could cause many problems for landlords, tenants and neighbours.

#### **Residential bonds**

Presently, most bonds lodged in South Australia are the equivalent to six weeks rent. However, the government is intent on raising the "relevant limit" to secure a bond

worth six weeks rent to \$800, thereby compelling the vast majority of tenants to pay a bond equivalent to no more than four weeks of rent. This move could dilute the financial security that landlords rely on in the event of property damage or rent arrears.

### **Perverse outcomes**

Given the current tight rental market, these changes could further complicate an already challenging situation. By deterring property investment, Labor could shrink the pool of available rental properties, leading to a tighter market, increased rents, and fewer choices for renters.

### **Labor's war on landlords**

My team and I are aware that for many South Australians, real estate investments represent the cornerstone of financial safety and future aspirations. The looming regulatory modifications may be seen by you as a direct challenge to the hard-earned financial balance you've managed to achieve.

As Leader of the Opposition, I am resolute in my commitment to advocating for an approach that safeguards both the rights of tenants and your rights as landlords. I believe in a balanced, fair, and prosperous rental market that serves the interests of all parties involved. I urge you to voice your thoughts and concerns about these impending changes. Your experiences, insights, and voices are crucial in informing our stance and our future advocacy.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or require further assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Speirs', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

**David Speirs MP**

Leader of the South Australian Liberal Party