

From: Mike Tribes

Sent: Friday, January 29, 2010 1:02 PM

Subject: Comments to the Select Committee on the Landlord and Tenant Act

I would like to comment on the review of the Landlord and Tenant Act.

I am a landlord, and own a few houses that I rent out. I am concerned about the rumours that I hear about the process, and want to know that the voices of Landlords are also heard during the review of this act.

I understand there are concerned groups providing input from the tenant side.

As a landlord I do hear about some of the stories of unscrupulous landlords that take advantage of our zero vacancy rate to take advantage of tenants.

But there are also landlords who treat their tenants very well, and tenants who do take advantage of landlords. I think both sides need to be heard, to ensure a balanced approach is taken.

It's worth pointing out that residential landlords provide a valuable service to the community, and that includes social housing. And yes, many of us do it for profit. For me, it's my retirement fund, since I don't have a job that provides a pension.

If the act changes considerably, I am concerned that it may become too onerous to be a landlord, and many other landlords feel similarly. Obviously, as risk and cost increase for the landlord, it could impact the rental rates, as well as the number of available units, as landlords decide it isn't worth the hassle, and get out of the business.

There are areas that need to be cleaned up in the act, like the damage deposit clauses. They are very general and non-specific. But overall, there are a lot of good things about our approach here. Although I haven't had a chance to use it, the dispute resolution through the courts seems very accessible, and could go a long way to resolving landlord-tenant issues, without making significant changes to the act.

A coalition of landlords has formed recently, and we are organised enough that information passed to the group spokespeople will be distributed to all members.

We would like to see the proposed changes to the act before the revisions are passed, and have an opportunity to comment on them.

We would like to be included in the discussions around changes to the act as well. It would be good for you as well, to have our comments on the impact of the changes. If a proposed change is going to significantly impact the cost of doing business, or the risk of doing business, it would be good for you to know that in advance. Because increased costs and risks will have the impact of increasing rents, and potentially reducing inventory.

Reducing the inventory is the last thing you want right now. There is already a shortage, which is allowing landlords to take advantage of people. If there was a higher vacancy rate, that would allow tenants to choose where they live, and the unscrupulous and dishonourable landlords would lose tenants.

Please let me know if you would consider including the Residential Landlord Coalition as a stakeholder to this process.

Thank you,

Mike Tribes