



Submission to the Review of Laws for Residential Land Lease Communities

By

Older Women's Network NSW

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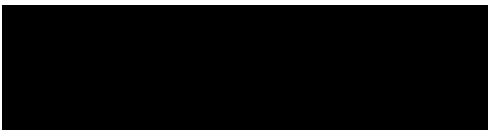
About the Older Women's Network

OWN NSW is a community-based organisation that is run by older women, for older women. Established in 1987, OWN aims to promote the rights, dignity and wellbeing of older women. We encourage mutual support and friendship amongst our members and work to foster a positive attitude toward ageing. We also advocate and raise awareness about key issues which impact the lives of older women, especially around housing insecurity, violence against older women and economic insecurity.

Comments

- OWN NSW is alarmed by the increasing number of older women who are becoming homeless. Older women are reaching retirement age with minimal savings and limited superannuation. Many older women have become residents in land lease communities because of the shortage of public housing and social housing.
- The government has to ensure that this housing option remains affordable, and that residents are treated fairly by owners and managers.
- The Laws for Residential Land Lease Communities must take the following into consideration:
 - (i) That residents do not have the same access to legal avenues as the ownership and management of the land they reside. It has become very expensive for land lease residents, many of whom are pensioners, to fight for their legitimate rights as they do not have the same financial strength as the owners.
 - (ii) All fees to be charged to residents must be transparent, and agreed to by the residents in advance.
 - (iii) In the event that the land is to be sold, it should be made compulsory for all residents to be provided with information of their rights and the opportunity to seek legal advice.
 - (iv) There should be penalties imposed on all owners and managers who intimidate residents.
 - (v) That the government must effectively balance the profit-making objective of corporations which have invested in this sector and the very real needs for fairness and transparency of the residents of these communities.

OWN NSW would like to support the submission of the residents of Sanctuary Lennox Head who have made salient points about the problems they face with the current 2013 Act. We urge the government to ensure that the laws are amended to provide peace of mind and security for residents. It is the right of older people to have security of shelter, and it is the responsibility of government to safeguard these rights.



Beverly Baker
Chair
chair@ownnsw.org.au