

**SPECIAL BULLETIN****COVID 19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE BILL – SITE RENTS**

Below is Minister De Brenni's speech regarding changes to the *Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003*, in support of the COVID 19 Emergency Response Bill (the **Bill**) which was passed in Parliament on 21 May 2020. Some relevant parts are highlighted:

*(Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport) (5.24 pm):  
The Palaszczuk government's response to COVID-19 has been focused on one important thing. It has been focussed on putting people first and, importantly, putting Queenslanders first. It is why in this state we have saved lives. It is why we have smashed the curve. It is why we are now squarely focused on the economic recovery of Queensland jobs. Throughout the whole health emergency the Palaszczuk government has been taking important steps to especially protect the most vulnerable in our community. I am talking about Queenslanders who through COVID-19 found themselves sleeping rough, unfortunately lost their jobs or found themselves in a position where they were unable to pay their rent.*

*The Palaszczuk government has been there to support all of those Queenslanders. We have been united with them. Today, as part of the Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill 2020, the Palaszczuk government is continuing to work with all parts of the Queensland community, to help each individual, each family and each business get through this unprecedented crisis. I rise to specifically address the components of the bill that support the effective operation of the over 180 manufactured home parks across Queensland.*

*A key aspect of all of our work over the last few months has been supporting Queenslanders to remain in their homes. It is very difficult to heed the urges to stay home if you do not have a home. We have worked hard to sustain tenancies of every kind, whether they be commercial tenancies or residential tenancies. This extends to those people who call one of the 180 manufactured home parks home. What the bill specifically does is give the Palaszczuk government a temporary regulation-making power in this area for the duration of the public health emergency, as has been done for other sectors. That will enable us to ensure that households that are recovering from the financial ramification of the crisis—most households have been impacted in one way or another—do not find their rent becomes unaffordable, particularly site rents for those in manufactured home parks. These amendments will specifically address stakeholder concerns around three things: the processes in the *Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act* for site rent increases; the specific market rent review processes in the act; and the process for changing the amount of rent that home owners in those parks are required to pay.*

*Through this power, we will establish the ability to make a regulation that will allow for modification or suspension—and this is important—where appropriate of the processes set out in the statute for changing site rents in residential parks. I know that members in this House—the member for Bancroft and colleagues of mine from the Logan community and others across the state—understand that the process for amending a site rent for a manufactured home park requires home owners to come together and work through the issues.*

*That puts them at particular risk during this public health emergency given the restrictions that exist around gatherings. It will also ensure—and this important—that operators are not required to engage in what is often a lengthy and often expensive process to determine a new site rent. I think this regulation-making power allows us to find a good middle ground between protecting home owners from the risks and also protecting the interests of the operators and saving them unnecessary expense. The regulation would be able to affect any site rent increases which happened after 19 March 2020—the beginning of COVID-19 emergency period. It will also allow for any processes commenced or completed. For clarity, it would be able to suspend the site rent increase process that commenced after 19 March 2020; suspend a site rent increase that commenced after that date; suspend the commencement of site rent increases that have not been finalised, or have not had specific processes commence, at the time the regulation is made; or allow a market review process to be completed but suspend the implementation of any site rent changes until a later date up to 31 December 2020.*

*I would like to thank members who have raised issues with me on behalf of their constituents including the Deputy Premier, the member for Murrumba; the member for Bancroft; the member for Waterford; the member for Kurwongbah; the member for Lytton; the member for Aspley; and the 21 May 2020 Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill 1093 member for Bundamba. I am sure many other members on this side of the House have raised this issue. They are all passionate champions for members of their communities. They are continually liaising with me about how we can make life better for the residents of manufactured home park residents. I have been out visiting with those constituents on a number of occasions. I thank and express my gratitude to those members for giving me the opportunity to hear directly from those residents. The best way to apply policy thinking is after hearing from those residents directly. I also want to thank the industry groups who have equally been as forthcoming in terms of their views and have allowed us to find a workable solution through all of these residential tenancy issues. In this particular case, I want to express our gratitude to the Associated Residential Parks Queensland, the Urban Development Institute of Australia, Caravanning Queensland, Caxton Legal Centre and the Property Council for working with the Palaszczuk government on this issue for the benefit of all Queenslanders. Following the anticipated passing of the bill, a further round of consultation will take place in the finalisation of the regulation. We will work with those members of this House who have a specific interest with the representative bodies of residents and also the representative bodies of operators to make sure that we get it right. As with the other regulations we have made in relation to the effective operation the housing portfolio during this period, this regulation will be subject to review on an ongoing basis and evaluation to make sure that as an instrument it remains relevant and effective. I commend these elements of the emergency bill to the House.'*

The **Bill** itself doesn't say too much more, as the detail will be in the associated Regulation which is to follow. ARPQ is part of the consultation process to finalise the Regulation and will keep you informed of developments.

26 May 2020