



Housing for the Aged Action Group Inc

ABN: 80 343 538 001

247 – 251 Flinders Lane

Melbourne 3000

Phone: 03 9654 7389

haag@oldertenants.org.au

www.oldertenants.org.au

12 March 2024

Committee on Planning,
Transport and City Services
ACT Legislative Assembly
GPO Box 1020 Canberra ACT 2601

Via email: LACommitteePTCS@parliament.act.gov.au

Dear Committee members,

Inquiry into the Property Developers Bill 2023

In 2016, Housing for the Aged Action Group was funded by the Wicking Trust (a philanthropic organisation) to conduct research in every state and territory to understand the depth and breadth of housing and homelessness issues of older people.¹ Following this project, HAAG was funded in 2020 for a further four years to continue this advocacy work.

HAAG endorses the submission from CFMEU to this inquiry. We support the intention of the Bill and the consultative approach so far. As an organisation representing older people, including older renters, older people in retirement villages, residential parks and experiencing other housing challenges, we support measures to ensure older people's rights are protected and they are empowered to exercise those rights.

According to our research, there are approximately 6,500 older renters over 55 in ACT and close to 2,000 of them are in households in the lowest income quintiles.² This research also identified about 3,400 people over 55 in the lowest two income quintiles paying off a mortgage on their primary residence.³ These demonstrate that a significant proportion of older people are financially vulnerable and can be at risk of homelessness without necessary protections.

Older people, especially those on income support payments or from low-income households are less likely to be able to afford the cost of fixing their dwellings if they own the house. Older people in private rental market who are expected to move due to structural issues of the properties are in a worse position given the current rental crisis in ACT. Finding an affordable place to live close to amenities, health facilities and their community and networks is a significant challenge. These challenges are exacerbated by the cost of moving as well as the physical demands of moving house.

¹ See further: Housing for the Aged Action Group, Ageing on the Edge National Action Project, accessible at: <https://www.oldertenants.org.au/ageing-edge-national-action-project>

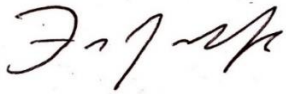
² Margaret Reynolds, Prof. Wendy Stone, et al, Older People's Housing and Housing Precariousness in the Australian Capital Territory (2011-2021), 2024.

³ Ibid

This Bill provides a vital opportunity to strengthen the protections for owner-occupiers as well as tenants. These protections should also be applicable universally to all types of property developments.

If you need further information, please feel free to get in contact with us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fiona York', written in a cursive style.

Fiona York
Executive Officer

Housing for the Aged Action Group