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REIV calls for a fair go on rental laws before Parliament this week

The Victorian Parliament's Legislative Council will consider the *Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill* (RTA Bill) this week, the second last sitting week before the caretaker period ahead of the Victorian Election in November.

Real Estate Institute of Victoria (REIV) President Richard Simpson said the REIV has worked closely with all political parties to help shape the best possible legislative outcome.

"The *Residential Tenancies Act* was enacted in 1997: no one is questioning the need for an update to rental laws," Mr Simpson said.

"When the Premier announced the RTA Bill, he said its purpose was to *'fix the system and make renting fair for all Victorians'* but the legislation, in its current form, is certainly not fair for investors, property owners and landlords.

"The RTA will deliver an unfair, unworkable and impractical system which would rob landlords of their right to consent to what goes on in their properties, burden them with unrealistic expenses to upgrade appliances and could mean they are not paid their rental on time for four out of every 12 months without any recourse."

The REIV requires the following amendments to the Bill:

- Retaining the current system around rental arrears enabling VCAT to make a call in the manner they do now based on evidence and circumstances;
- Landlords must be able to consent to pets and there must be provision for pet bonds;
- Property owners must be allowed to consent to property modifications and urgent repairs;
- Retention of the 120 day 'No Reason' notice to vacate; and
- A realistic staggered upgrade (five years) of appliances and an incentive scheme.

Mr Simpson said the REIV has written to its members this week, asking them to contact Members of Parliament to explain how the RTA is simply unworkable.

"It is in everyone's interests – renters, investors, agents and government – that we have a system that is fair, balanced and practical," Mr Simpson said.

"These proposed changes could have a significant impact on an already constricted rental market: vacancy rates are at record lows, there is declining levels of rental stock coming on to the market and interest rates are rising for the first time in two years.

"If the Government makes it too hard then landlords will consider removing properties from the rental market, rents are likely to rise and property owners will be forced to minimise their risk by offering shorter tenancies."

The REIV has advocated strongly against the 'Rent Fair' legislation, on behalf of its 5000 members and their landlord clients. The online 'Rent Fair is Unfair' petition has 27,000 signatures. The REIV's detailed policy position is available on our **website**.

MORE DETAILS:

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