

2014.11.25

4.1 Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier of the Minister for Housing regarding security of tenure for residents of lodging houses:

Does the Minister have any plans to bring forward proposals to improve security of tenure for residents of lodging houses?

Deputy A.E. Pryke of Trinity (The Minister for Housing):

All rented accommodation in Jersey that is self-contained is already covered by the Residential Tenancy Law, which gives tenants security of tenure. This does include a significant majority of lodging house tenants. However I am keen to see what more can be done for the minority of occupants who do not have this protection. For this reason, one of my first acts as Minister has been to ask officers to undertake a review of this area. I will be reporting on this in the first quarter of next year.

4.1.1 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

That is good to know. Is there any particular thing you may anticipate that would be useful to progress with to improve tenure for residents? Any specifics she thinks might be a good idea?

The Deputy of Trinity:

One thing too is about increasing the minimum standards. I think that is important, as we have discussed here before, but it is the security of tenure, especially for the minority of occupants who are not covered. But I am very happy to work with the Deputy. If he thinks of any specific area that should be covered then I am very happy to talk to him about it.

4.1.2 Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier:

Could the Minister inform Members what distinguishes those who already have some protection and those who do not? Could she delineate between the 2 groups? She said some have protection, some have not.

The Deputy of Trinity:

Yes, it depends on many factors, which includes the type of accommodation that they are living in and what the law says. Self-contained means that only the occupants use it so it must contain all of the following: a bath, a shower, wash hand basin, a kitchen or kitchenette, a place to sleep or toilets. If it is not part of the self-contained then my understanding is that it does not fall into the Residency Tenancy Law.

4.1.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Supplementary, if I may. Has the Minister any idea of what proportions, what numbers, she is talking about who are not covered by this protection?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Yes, about 600 fall under this category and 25 per cent of that 600 do not fall into the Residential Tenancy Law.

4.1.4 Deputy M. Tadier:

Can the Minister confirm that there is a political at will to end this discrimination and this apartheid, if you like, about those who are caught outside of the regulations?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I think that I made that very clear in my original answer, and I am very happy to work with Deputy Tadier as well.

4.1.5 Deputy M. Tadier:

Supplementary question. Will the Minister confirm that there is talk already in her department from officers about whether or not the unqualified sector and the qualified sector is the optimum situation, i.e. should we just be having one type of residential status for rentals rather than 2?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I cannot confirm whether that is or is not. That is something that I need to look at and get further information about.

The Bailiff:

Do you wish a final question, Deputy Mézec?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

No, thank you. Just to thank the Minister for her helpful answer.