

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (FAMILY VIOLENCE) BILL 2018

Discharge of Order and Referral to Standing Committee on Legislation — Motion

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [3.39 pm] — without notice: I move —

- (1) That order of the day 21, Residential Tenancies Legislation Amendment (Family Violence) Bill 2018, be discharged and referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation for consideration and report by no later than Thursday, 22 November 2018; and
- (2) the committee has the power to inquire into and report on the policy of the bill.

I understand that this motion reflects agreement reached behind the Chair on this legislation. I note that the reporting time has the Standing Committee on Legislation reporting back two weeks before the house rises for the end of the year. This Residential Tenancies Legislation Amendment (Family Violence) Bill goes to the safety of victims of family and domestic violence. It is important to the government that the bill pass in a timely fashion and I understand there is an understanding that there will then be enough time for the house to complete the debate on the bill.

HON RICK MAZZA (Agricultural) [3.40 pm]: I rise to say that I also support the motion. I know there has been some discussion behind the Chair. I think this bill has some issues that need to be investigated by the Standing Committee on Legislation. I know that the timing for this is quite tight, having only five weeks to conduct the inquiry. We will see, I suppose, how the legislation committee goes with its evidence. If there needs to be an extension of time, I will certainly support that.

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition) [3.40 pm]: The Liberal Party will also support this referral following discussions with Hon Rick Mazza, in particular, who is comfortable with it, as it was his motion. Having said that, we are conscious that it is a very, very constrained and ambitious time frame, I have to say. Having said that we support this referral, we are very mindful of the constrained time frame and if there is a need for an extension, we will support that.

HON ALANNAH MacTIERNAN (North Metropolitan — Minister for Regional Development) [3.41 pm]: I thank members for supporting this. I think it is important for members to have an opportunity to explore it. But I want to say that I think there has been an understanding on the part of many in the chamber on the other side that important groups are relying on this protective measure. I certainly hope that the agreement to have this inquiry completed and brought back to this house is honoured.

HON ALISON XAMON (North Metropolitan) [3.42 pm]: I indicate that the Greens will not stand in the way of this bill being referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation. But I think the concerns raised behind the Chair are effectively about the inherent policy tension within the bill, and I question how much that can be resolved within a parliamentary inquiry. The reality is that we will always have to look at the issue of tensions between the rights of landlords and the need for people who are escaping family and domestic violence to ensure they are safe. I therefore question how much that can be resolved. I hope it can be dealt with as swiftly as possible because I know also that many people in the community are depending on these reforms. I think those people in particular who work in the family and domestic violence sector are very concerned about any additional hold-ups.

HON COLIN HOLT (South West) [3.43 pm]: I rise to indicate the support of the Nationals also for the motion and discussions had behind the Chair. We are the house of review. We often see the opportunity to refer legislation to the Standing Committee on Legislation to improve bills. I am cautiously optimistic that we might be able to meet the time frames because we certainly do not want to hold up the passage of this important reform, but if it can improve the bill, let us give it a go and see how it comes back from the committee within that very tight time frame. We certainly support the motion.

Question put and passed.