

26 January 2016

To: **Secretariat**
Social Services Committee
Parliament House
Wellington

SUBMISSION OF THE CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL ON THE RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT BILL

1. The Christchurch City Council (**the Council**) thanks the Committee for the opportunity to make this submission.
2. The Council does not wish to appear in support of its submission.
3. The Council has provided social housing since the 1920s and currently manages 2274 social housing units.
4. The Council supports the changes proposed to the Residential Tenancies Act 1986.
5. It agrees with the proposed requirements regarding smoke alarms and insulation in residential rental properties, and will be providing comments to the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment on its discussion document dealing with the detail for smoke alarms and insulation. These amendments are an important step to improving the quality and health of housing in New Zealand. The Council has smoke alarms in its social housing properties. In addition, since January 2014 Council's social housing units have been "smoke-free" with all new tenants agreeing not to smoke in their units. In 2015 the Council won the Canterbury Health in All Policies Partnership Excellence award for this initiative.
6. Since 2002 the Council has undertaken a programme of installing insulation in its social housing units. This has included insulation in the ceiling and where practicable under floors and in walls. The Council plans to complete this programme by 30 June 2016.
7. The Council also supports the Bill providing greater enforcement powers by the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; and reforming the law in relation to abandoned rental premises. The former provides greater protection for tenants and the latter enables properties to be made available faster to new tenants. It is especially important in the social housing sector that houses are available quickly to people in need.
8. If you require any additional information from the Council, please contact Nicole Randall Principal Advisor Social Housing 03 941 8859.

Yours faithfully

Councillor Ali Jones
Christchurch City Council