

# STATES OF JERSEY



## **PETS IN RENTAL PROPERTIES (P.70/2024): AMENDMENT (P.70/2024 AMD.) – COMMENTS**

---

**Presented to the States on 8th November 2024  
by the Minister for Housing**

---

**STATES GREFFE**

## COMMENTS

The proposer begins his report by stating:

*“A legislative framework for pets in rental properties would be an excessive and costly way to solve the issue of allowing pets in rental properties.”*

If the Deputy believes this, he should vote against the proposition.

Instead, by proposing an amendment to refer to the production of non-binding guidance, he is seeking to turn a debate from one in which members will be able to resolve on whether or not there ought to be modest but meaningful change, to one where we have a choice between the status quo and a slightly shinier status quo.

My intention, if P.70/2024 is adopted unamended, is to propose a clause in the new Residential Tenancy Law which will essentially codify what already exists as best practice across the rental market, where good landlords will happily allow their tenants to have pets, so long as it is appropriate in that particular property and where reasonable safeguards are in place. No new obligations will be imposed on them.

The Deputy claims this will be *“an excessive and costly way to solve the issue”*. I strongly disagree with this. In fact, it can be delivered with very little extra effort from me and my team because this is an issue which has already been considered, where there is plenty of evidence of best practice to draw from, and which will only require a few extra lines in the already-planned legislation to deliver it.

I believe that the Deputy’s proposed alternative will represent worse value for money, as it will have to be delivered as an entirely separate project to the Residential Tenancy Law work. It will require reprioritisation of resources to deliver by March 2025, taking valuable officer time away from other strategically important issues, such as supporting the delivery of more affordable homes and work to address the plight of homelessness. Guidance takes considerable time to produce, but due to it being non-binding, it will in all likelihood be routinely ignored by those who it would actually be targeted at.

The proposer goes on to state:

*“With the correct guidance and policy framework, a code of practice could evolve that would be more beneficial to both tenants and landlords and provide less risk for straining of their relationship and contractual agreements.”*

This is not credible. It is axiomatic that binding rules are more impactful than non-binding guidance.

Jersey has a housing crisis. Dedicating officer time and effort to a project that will have no meaningful impact in improving rights for tenants and protections for landlords will serve as a distraction from work which will provide a tangible safeguard and realisable rights for both landlords and tenants.

I would urge States Members to reject this amendment. In return, should P.70 be adopted, I will commit that in the debate on the new Residential Tenancy Law next year I will propose the clause relating to pets in rental homes for a separate vote. This will

enable members to have a further opportunity to evaluate the content of that new clause, separate to everything else being proposed in that law.