

Review: P.24/2025 - Draft Residential Tenancy (Jersey) Amendment Law 202-

Submission: Anon 22

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Dear Scrutiny,

I've never written to a scrutiny panel before but this needs me to speak up.

I am deeply concerned, in fact, horrified, about the proposed changes to the Residential Tenancy Law.

I am a landlord of one flat which I own jointly with my husband. We have owned it for nearly 20 years, and we have had the current tenant for 10 years and the previous one for 7 years.

For the last 10 years, we have never put the rent up. Not even cost of living. He is getting a bargain! But we like providing a home for him and his family and we aren't greedy. Our tenant is excellent and a few times he said he would move over the years so we thought, oh well, if he does, that's the time we will amend the rental price with a new contract and tenant. But then he kept deciding to keep staying and so we didn't change the rent.

Therefore to suggest there are only bad landlords or greedy landlords just isn't true. I'd love to see any figures on this - landlords want secure tenancies with happy tenants - Jersey is small and it wouldn't take long for word to get around if bad landlords continued to be bad. I've heard of terrible tenants (our first one was terrible. Didn't pay the rent and then did a moonlight flit owing us thousands). The other 2 tenants, very good. The current registration scheme is effective and I am very happy with that - we had done what was required anyway for our flat even in advance of the rules coming in. Of course we had, we are good landlords.

Our tenant is happy – and if any issues, we sort within hours if not a few days.

However the news of impending potential law changes has shaken us considerably. To the point that we have had to drastically take action. I've instructed a new lease at market rate yesterday to be discussed with our tenant via a rental agency. I wouldn't have put his rent up at all or even be thinking of it if the new potential laws weren't being discussed. It's unsettled so many landlords I know and most have sadly decided to sell - it's just not worth the risk. These other landlords also don't believe that Sam Mézec is basing his ideas on facts and I agree - where are the facts? There aren't any as far as I can tell. Laws shouldn't be changed on a whim without proper facts.

And it's not landlords who are buying rental properties at the mo (due to the crazy 3% stamp duty at a time when mortgage rates are very high) so if individuals buy an existing rental, that's a loss of more rental stock. With less stock, demand goes up again and rents rise. Which is what you don't want to happen.

If our tenant decides to leave, which he may well do given I'm having to put the rent up only because of the potential new laws coming in, I'm almost certain we will sell. I would not take the chance on a new tenant without a fixed lease. And if I did, I would only do a fixed 3 year lease and never extend to the rolling lease due to the difficulty getting a bad tenant out. Some of the horror stories I've recently heard are shocking - can't prove the intimidation of one tenant in a block of

people. And to get a tenant out, you would need proof so you'd be stuck and that's not fair on the other people living there.

Therefore tenants who I would normally let to for 10 years or more would need to leave after 3 years max. And I wouldn't extend whereas before, I would have been happy to and did. That's a stupid unintended consequence of this ill-thought-out proposal.

Rather than law, I think Guidance is a better alternative. These proposals are rushed and the fact the deadline wasn't allowed to be extended says it all. It's a MAJOR piece of work, I've seen hardly anything about this Scrunity hearing and so many tenants I know plus a few landlords have no idea it's being discussed. I've tried to tell them but I only heard last week myself and I only found out today that the deadline for responses is tomorrow!

So I say, bring in Guidance and get proper facts and research before changing any actual laws. The market is difficult as it is, this will have horrible unintended consequences mainly for tenants. We will be fine as a landlord cos we can just sell it but I feel very sorry for all tenants in this. Some can't buy, some don't want to so they need a proper supply of rental properties to choose from. This law is going to make that so much worse and that wasn't what it was designed for.

I also cannot imagine how much of taxpayers' money would be used on a tribunal set up. If all rented properties are now licenced, then start fact-finding, getting info on rents etc and get a holistic view on what it's really like. It feels like the current proposal is a finger in the air and guessing. It's too important to just guess.

So that's my view. I don't want to potentially scare my tenant with what I'm thinking. And I wouldn't have changed anything if these proposed laws weren't being discussed because to me, they are poorly thought out and scary for all.

Thanks and good luck pulling it all together.