



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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English

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Recognise housing as a human right

THE Tenants Union of Tasmania commends Premier David Bartlett on the proactive and principled stand he has taken on the issue of human rights protection in Tasmania (Mercury, October 31).

It is imperative that the introduction of a charter of rights include the right to adequate housing.

Less than one month ago on October 6, coinciding with International Tenants Day, the Tenants Union launched a community-led campaign for a charter of rights that includes economic, social and cultural rights. The campaign was supported by some of the pre-eminent legal minds in Australia and had the backing of a significant number of well-respected Tasmanian organisations.

The focus of our campaign is based in the incontrovertible acknowledgement that without the protection of stable and affordable housing, it is very difficult to exercise other rights. For example, courts are more reluctant to grant bail to a person accused of a crime when they do not have a fixed address.

Tasmania has lagged behind some other Australian jurisdictions in protecting human rights in a charter of rights but Mr Bartlett has the opportunity to courageously enshrine the right to adequate housing and other economic, cultural and social rights.

Sandy Duncanson

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