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Attention Editors/Chief of Staff

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\$100 BILLION QUEENSLAND STRATA SECTOR BEING LEFT BEHIND BY OTHER STATES

ONGOING PROPERTY LAW REVIEW MUST BE DONE BY CHRISTMAS

The head of Queensland's \$100 billion strata sector says Queensland is being left behind by other States on strata reform and it may be costing Queenslanders a better lifestyle and jobs.

Hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders who own strata properties or who work in the strata sector are awaiting legislative changes that would create jobs in the property sector.

New South Wales earlier this month introduced its long awaited strata reform legislation.

Strata Community Australia (Qld) President, Simon Barnard, said today Queensland has remained in holding mode for over 2 years now, regarding the progression of strata reform.

"Many within the sector hoped the recent State Budget would be a starting point for strata reforms, but unfortunately no further allocations to strata engineering assessments were made."

"We are not being critical of the current Government, but we want to see the big property law review tackle consumer protection items by Christmas this year."

"The strata review commenced under the LNP government which was a welcome step but the completion is still outstanding and there is a desire from the strata sector to move on the reforms.

"With the emergence of issues like concrete cancer, pets in strata and shrinking apartment size presenting headaches for many within the sector, we hope to see some finality before Christmas."

Mr Barnard says that many of the issues hoped to be ticked off by the stalled property law review have been embraced by similar reforms either proposed or implemented in other states, so it must now be Queensland's time.

“NSW recently introduced sweeping draft legislation that introduces modern concepts of bodies corporate as democratically organised, fair and flexible communities that can self-regulate for example in regards to by-laws .”

“The key focus of NSW's draft legislation is to allow a scheme's body corporate to make their own rules and not have them constantly overturned. Real powers can be given to the body corporate to fine common property parking offenders if they collaborate with council.”

“The most significant single reform being considered in NSW is that bodies corporate can now make a decision to terminate a scheme with 75% majority voting approval, instead of a current unanimous requirement,” Mr Barnard said.

“We want the 75% voting approval introduced in Queensland, so that strata property owners can make decisions based on majority voting rather than the highly restrictive unanimous system.”

Mr Barnard says that buildings who have reached the end of their commercial life cost too much to maintain. Such legislation enables owners to start from scratch with a decision of 75% in favour.

“Strata properties are communities in every sense of the word, and thus, fair, group decision making should play a part in voting, but the current state of play means that proceedings can be halted by a single owner.”

“We hear of instances where a single owner has blocked the re-development of run down, aged and degraded apartment and unit blocks, which in some cases should be rightfully bulldozed. The rest of the owners who want change can be frustrated by one single owner and it is costing them money and costing jobs that would be linked to re-development.”

“Problems like concrete cancer are an emerging threat that poses a multi-million dollar repair bill to owners and bodies corporate, when sometimes the best solution is knocking it down and starting over.”

“No one wants to be told their home is set to be bulldozed, but living in a community should mean making decisions as a group, and we want the State Government to catch Queensland up on other states with this common sense reform.”

“We want to see more progress on the Queensland Property Law Review.”

ENDS