

11 November 2024

Our ref: MC-LP

The Hon David Janetzki MP
Treasurer, Minister for Energy,
Minister for Home Ownership
1 William Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Treasurer

Welcome to portfolio and legal profession issues

On behalf of the Queensland Law Society (QLS), I again extend my congratulations to you on your appointment as Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership.

We take this opportunity to offer the assistance of the legal profession and in particular, QLS legal policy committees, where your responsibilities involve legislative and policy reform. The QLS legal policy committees examine policy and legislative proposals and also consider practical issues affecting the profession such as court practice and procedure.

Members of our Energy & Resources Law Committee, Water & Agribusiness Law Committee, First Nations Legal Policy Committee, Property and Development Law Committee, Revenue Law Committee and Planning & Environmental Law Committee have substantial expertise in their respective areas, which might be helpful to progressing the policy objectives of the government.

Funding to support legal system and the Queensland community

QLS looks forward to engaging in the budget submission process in due course. In the meantime, we highlight the following key calls of our members to allocate funding:

- To develop and maintain a functional digital case management system, including digitisation of registries, electronic filing and eTrial infrastructure, for all courts in all jurisdictions across Queensland without delay
- For better and safer access to courthouses across the state, including replacement courthouses in Beenleigh and Townsville
- To support the growing demand for the services of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) and the need for QCAT support services, including the legal assistance sector, which should include targeted funding to support the increasing workload in the guardianship jurisdiction

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- On a sustainable basis for the legal assistance sector generally, to support all Queenslanders to access justice and address the unmet legal needs in our community
- Maintaining the increased funding provision to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service for the 2023-2024 period, to support ongoing workforce demands
- To support the community and the property industry with the implementation of the seller disclosure framework in the *Property Law Act 2023*
- For a dedicated team to examine the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability
- For regional law students and regional legal practices to support retention of local legal talent and ensure the ongoing provision of essential legal services to these communities.

Energy and resources initiatives

We welcome the commitment of the government in its First 100 Days Plan to establish a Resources Cabinet Subcommittee.

We also welcomed the commitment of the LNP in its response to the QLS 2024 Queensland State Election - Call to Parties to:

- Reduce emissions and reach Net Zero by 2050 by working with industry sectors to develop achievable and practical plans; and
- Ensuring a code of conduct is established for renewable energy developers. This code of conduct will be developed in consultation with industry and be aimed at driving social licence in the rural and regional communities that host renewable energy infrastructure.

Our policy committees are well-placed to assist the government in developing the code of conduct. We look forward to working with your team on this initiative.

Home ownership

QLS recognises the significant challenges for the Queensland community in accessing housing and the state government's role in developing the policy response to improving housing affordability and availability.

QLS supports the continued analysis of options to respond to the housing crisis, with a sound evidence base for legislative reform.

In the QLS 2024 Queensland State Election - Call to Parties 2024, QLS called for a commitment to establishing a legal stakeholder reference group of practitioners with expertise in tax law, property law, planning and environment law, elder law (including retirement villages and aged care), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and experts from the legal assistance sector.

Seeking input from a wide range of perspectives will identify the legal consequences of housing reform initiatives and deliver the greatest possible benefit of new proposals.

We offer the assistance of the QLS legal policy committees in analysing new policy initiatives to improve pathways for home ownership in Queensland, recognising that the government has already identified duty reforms in this regard.

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We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at your convenience to discuss these complex issues further. Please do not hesitate to contact our Director of Advocacy and Legal Policy, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] to arrange a convenient time.

