



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

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9 June 2015

Dear Patricia,

Queen's Speech Debate – Housing Bill

During the Queen's Speech Debate on the 2 June you raised a number of questions about the Housing Bill including the Right to Buy, I have been asked to reply on behalf of the Department for Communities and Local Government.

I am sure you will recognise that policy details regarding this manifesto commitment to extend the Right to Buy will be set out by the Government in due course, and the costs/impact of the policy calculated in the Impact Assessment.

The Right to Buy policy is about equity - about ensuring that social tenants have equal access to the opportunities for home ownership. Around 630,000 tenants living in housing associations already have a Preserved Right to Buy and a further 800,000 have the Right to Acquire. But a further 500,000 have no purchase rights at all. So a situation could exist where one tenant has access to a £70,000 discount and the tenant living next door has only a £9,000 discount or none at all. This is not right - we therefore will extend the Right to Buy level discounts to Housing Association Tenants.

With regards to non stock owning local authorities and how they will fund the discount, the policy will not impact on those councils who have transferred their housing stock. We have said that we want replacement affordable housing to be in the same area and will be setting out further details on the mechanics in due course. We will also be carefully considering the impacts of the policy on different parts of the country.

Lastly, the Right to Buy policy does not turn Housing Associations into public bodies. The receipts from homes sold will enable housing associations to invest in new affordable housing.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the House of Lords library.

*Yours ever,
Susan*

BARONESS WILLIAMS OF TRAFFORD