



Martin Foley MP

Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing  
Minister for Mental Health  
Minister for Equality  
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Danny Pearson MP  
Chair  
Public Accounts and Estimates Committee  
Parliament House  
Spring Street  
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Mr Pearson

Thank you for your correspondence of 6 August on behalf of the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee, which sought further information with regards to the third question on notice from the 2018-19 budget estimates hearing.

I have provided a new response for question 3 containing additional information, which is attached.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martin Foley', written over the typed name.

Martin Foley MP  
20 / 3 / 2018

**ATTACHMENT:           QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE AND FURTHER  
INFORMATION AGREED TO BE SUPPLIED AT THE  
HEARINGS**

**Hon Martin Foley MP**

**HOUSING, DISABILITY AND AGEING PORTFOLIO - MINISTER**

- 3. Please provide the most recent data on how many public housing tenants are currently in arrears with rent, and how many have been evicted.**

Tenancies at risk, with the tenant's consent, are referred to the department's funded tenancy support services. These services explore the full range of issues impacting on the tenant and provide wrap around services to meet the tenant's needs. These services may include family violence support, public tenant employment programs, financial counselling and multiple and complex needs support.

With the chaotic Commonwealth robo-debt program unleashed this year, and a very high percentage of public tenants reliant on welfare as their sole or dominant form of income, our tenants are disproportionately affected and more likely to fall into arrears through the incompetence and mean-spirited nature of the Turnbull Government rather than any fault of their own.

Continual attacks on vulnerable people by the Abbott/Turnbull Government have occurred as crucial tenancy support was slashed at under the former Victorian Government, with the Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP) subject to devastating cuts, resulting in vulnerable tenants missing out on the support they need, and meaning more were evicted into homelessness when they got behind on their rent.

The Andrews Labor Government has reversed these cuts to SHASP, with the new Tenancy Plus program yielding immediate results. While in the past year following Commonwealth cuts there has been a slight increase in arrears to 9604, there has been a 19.6% reduction in evictions due to rental arrears, down to 189. This compares with 11399 tenants in arrears, and 313 evictions for arrears, at the corresponding point on 30 June 2014.