Ageing on the Edge

NSW COALITION

Inquiry into NSW Human Rights Bill

This submission is supported by the following Coordination Group members of the NSW Ageing on the Edge Coalition -

COUNCIL ON THE AGEING NEW SOUTH WALES

OWN OLDER WOMEN'S NETWORK NEW SOUTH WALES

TENANTS' UNION OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Uniting

WEL

mercy foundation®

haag HOUSING FOR THE AGED ACTION GROUP INC.

Associate Professor Emma Power,

Western Sydney University

About NSW Ageing on the Edge Coalition

The NSW Ageing on the Edge coalition includes over 150 member organisations and supporters working together to address housing and homelessness related issues of older people in NSW.[1] Coalition members are advocates for change including people with lived experience, service providers, peak advocacy bodies and private sector organisations. The Coalition was originally convened as a reference group for the Ageing on the Edge project that launched a report in 2017, *The Older I Get the Scarier It Becomes – Older People at Risk of Homelessness in NSW*.[2]

The NSW Ageing on the Edge coalition welcomes the opportunity to provide input into the NSW Human Rights Bill 2025. This submission highlights some of the key aspects specific to older people in NSW.

Housing as a human right

Australia ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) in 1980 that recognises the right of everyone to adequate housing, and to take appropriate steps to ensure the realisation of this right.[3] In addition, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates that 'Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services.'[4]

Unfortunately, the current housing crisis is resulting in many people not being able to access safe, affordable and accessible long-term housing. As a coalition representing older people, including older renters, older people living in retirement villages and residential parks, and experiencing other housing challenges, we support measures to ensure older people's rights are protected and they are empowered to exercise those rights.

A Human Rights Act will strengthen the dignity and human rights of residents of NSW and enhance the work of government whilst retaining parliamentary sovereignty. The Human Rights Bill 2025 provides a robust framework to ensure residents of NSW can exercise the same rights as those in Victoria, ACT and Queensland.

A rights-based framework would ensure that older people in NSW are able to exercise their rights related to housing, such as evictions, housing allocations and access to residential care at the appropriate time. It is critical that people who experience additional disadvantages and discrimination such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, older people, women, people from culturally and linguistically diverse people, LGBTIQA+ people, people with disability and people in rural, remote and regional areas.

---

[1] See further, Ageing on the Edge NSW Coalition, accessible at: https://www.oldertenants.org.au/national-action/ageing-the-edge-nsw-forum

[2] J. Fiedler and D. Faulkner, The older I get the scarier it becomes: Older people at risk of homelessness in New South Wales, 2017, accessible at: https://www.oldertenants.org.au/sites/default/files/older-i-get-scarier-it-becomes291117.pdf

[3] International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

[4] Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Recommendation

- **The Committee recommends the NSW Human Rights Bill be passed.**