



HOUSE OF LORDS

Industry and Regulators Committee

House of Lords

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21 May 2024

Lee Rowley MP
Minister of State (Minister for Housing, Planning, and Building Safety)
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
2 Marsham St
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear Minister,

REGULATION OF PROPERTY AGENTS

Thank you for your letter of 10 May 2024, in response to the Committee's letter to the Secretary of State dated 22 March 2024.

We recognise that the Government has been working on important legislation to reform the housing market, in the form of the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill and the Renters (Reform) Bill. As you know, our inquiry found that the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill "somewhat addresses the power imbalance faced by leaseholders", though our witnesses felt that these provisions were not sufficient to address the issues that leaseholders face.

Nevertheless, we were disappointed by the brevity of your response to our letter, and by your position that the Department will only discuss these matters once the two Bills above have concluded their parliamentary passage. When we wrote to the Department on 22 March, we requested, and expected, a response to all of our conclusions and recommendations; your letter does not respond to any of them. This is particularly disappointing given that it was the Department that asked to respond to the Committee in writing, rather than through an oral evidence session as we had requested. Moreover, given the brevity of your letter, it was all the more frustrating to receive it two weeks after the deadline we had set (26 April 2024). Taken together, we do not believe this is a satisfactory approach to parliamentary scrutiny of government policy.

We note your willingness to discuss these important matters further in the future, and we will be receptive to requests for a discussion as you suggest. However, in the interests of parliamentary scrutiny, we will still expect a full written response to the Committee's original conclusions and recommendations.

Yours sincerely,

Baroness Taylor of Bolton
Chair of the Industry and Regulators Committee