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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Increased protection for Retirement village residents welcomed**

Seniors' peak organisation COTA Queensland has welcomed the Palaszczuk Government's announcement to strengthen consumer protection for seniors living in retirement villages.

COTA Queensland Chief Executive Mark Tucker-Evans said older Queenslanders required simple standard contracts that clearly set out fees, dispute resolution processes and exit fees to enable them to make well-informed decisions prior to entering retirement village living.

"Currently many people become Retirement Village residents without fully understanding that they don't have the same controls they would have if they owned their own home.

Legislation needs to be amended to provide some level of assurance to both current residents of retirement villages and manufactured home park and those considering these housing options."

COTA has been working with the Government and other interested parties to provide advice to assist older Queenslanders consider residential transition options.

"Planning ahead is critical. Housing decisions are complex, often have emotional implications and for some older people decisions may be made under stress. Many older people are overwhelmed by the challenge of finding and processing the information they need." Said Mr Tucker-Evans

COTA has called on the State Government to assist build the capacity of older Queenslanders to make informed decisions about their housing through funding face-to-face interactive education sessions. These sessions would be provided by other older people who would be trained in the topic to facilitate open and honest discussion about housing needs in a safe and supportive format and environment.

COTA Queensland has advocated for age friendly cities and communities for over a decade. Age-friendly cities and communities promote health, wellbeing, and community participation. Facilitating informed decisions about housing is crucial to ensuring these outcomes and avoiding the negative outcomes associated with poor or delayed choices.

**END**

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