

Thursday, 16 January 2020

Submitted via Engage Victoria

Kirsten Brownstein
Principal Policy Advisor – Gas Heater Safety
Energy Demand, Programs and Safety – Energy Group
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Dear Ms Brownstein,

Re: Discussion Paper; Options for Addressing Risks from Open Flued Gas Space Heaters in Victoria – Letter of Support for Tenants Victoria Submission

Consumer Action Law Centre (**Consumer Action**) welcomes consultation on the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning's (**DEWLP**) Discussion Paper; Options for Addressing Risks from Open Flued Gas Space Heaters in Victoria (**Discussion Paper**). We are writing in support of the submission from Tenant's Victoria.

Consumer Action's National Debt Helpline service provided financial counselling to over 11,000 people in the 2018/19 financial year. Often issues with low quality rental properties or disputes with rental providers are identified as key contributors to the financial issues people face when calling this service. As discussed in the Tenants Victoria submission, reforms in relation to open flued gas space heaters must ensure tenant's safety and work with other tenancy regulation reforms. Such reforms should act to remove barriers to improving energy efficiency which can deliver significant energy bill savings and improvements to health and wellbeing for renters.

As recommended by Tenants Victoria, we support 'Option 2' in the Discussion paper to implement a phased banning of open flued gas heaters with other measures such 'Option 4' to request an improvement to standards at a national level. Similarly, we also support the new 'Option 5' as another measure (which has been floated since the Tenants Victoria submission) as another measure alongside 'Option 2.' This is because 'Option 5' could implement more timely safety standard requirements in Victoria while a longer national process takes place.

Please contact Jake Lilley on 03 9670 5088 or at jake@consumeraction.org.au if you would like to discuss this letter.

Yours sincerely,

CONSUMER ACTION LAW CENTRE



Gerard Brody
Chief Executive Officer

