



PRESS RELEASE

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The GSD's statement in respect of the decision of the Court of Appeal is a remarkably foolish illustration of the party's intellectual decline.

The Chief Minister has explained in detail the reasons for the 2013 Housing Amendment Act. It is incredible that the GSD are now suggesting that their members - each of whom is paid almost £40,000 a year - did not check the law being amended and did no homework in deciding how to vote. That is a stunning indictment of them. The then 7 members of the GSD in Parliament cost the taxpayer almost £300,000.00 per year and it appears that they do not even bother to work out what the laws they are voting for or against relate to.

Ironically, one of the the members of the GSD who voted in favour of the amendment, Mr Bossino, is a member of the Chambers, TSN, who represent the Government in this matter and who have defended the legality of the amendment to the Housing Act. The current leader of the GSD is also a member of the same Chambers.

The Government won the case in the Supreme Court and considers that the finding of Mrs Justice Rammage Prescott was correct.

At the time of that ruling, which also set out the effect of the amendment, the GSD said nothing publicly to suggest that they would not have supported the amendment.

The Government has already stated that it respects the decision of the Court of Appeal whilst profoundly disagreeing with it. The Government is therefore in the process of finalising an appeal to the Privy Council.

Additionally, a large number of tenants of Francis Flats have written to the Chief Minister asking that the Government should appeal the decision.

In effect, the facts is that Government has acted to defend the interests of tenants in the face of landlords who are trying to increase rents by a factor of 300% or 400%. The GSD is saying that if they had done their homework and worked out that this was the effect of amendments moved by the Chief Minister, they would have sided with the landlords against the tenants.

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, said: "I believe we did the right thing to legislate to protect the tenants of Francis Flats from the huge increases in rents proposed by landlords. I properly explained the effect to Parliament of a technical amendment. I explained Paul Balban was



potentially affected and therefore would abstain. The GSD said nothing and raised no questions. The whole Parliament, except Paul, voted for the measure, which therefore passed unanimously. We defended the measure against the landlords in the Supreme Court and we won. At appeal we have lost and we respect the Courts findings, as is proper and necessary in a jurisdiction respectful of the rule of law and with important divisions between the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. We will exercise our right of appeal to defend the obvious social policy we were, and are promoting, namely the defence of the tenants against landlords. But with this last statement the GSD show who they really are, who they really stand by when the chips are down and how little work they do for the £300,000.00 per year they cost this community. That party really has had its day. We will continue to instruct Mr Azopardi and Mr Bossino's firm to defend our actions in the Privy Council."