

Letter to the Editor
Irish Times

1st May 2014

Sir,

The regime of landlord bashing continues unabated in your report on housing and homelessness crisis (Olivia Kelly, April 30).

Your writer makes the astounding and unsubstantiated claim that landlords don't want tenants on Rent Supplement, when the facts show that upwards of 78,000 recipients of Rent Supplement are in homes provided by landlords. Perhaps your writer would agree that the housing crisis was not brought about by any actions of landlords, but by light touch regulation, Government inactivity and the greed of lenders.

Landlords are business people who rely on tenants for the success or failure of their business, and that business is responsible for housing up to 800,000 people. Landlords have no wish to refuse business, but it must make economic sense for them, particularly as actions by the present Government in refusing to recognise property letting as a business means that many of the normal expenses of business are not allowable, which in turn can mean rental income being assessed for real tax on a net loss - and that tax has to be paid. In addition, lenders are squeezing landlords in an unmerciful way. All the while, landlord bashing seems to be the order of the day when the housing crisis and homelessness is written about.

The private rental sector will continue to play its part in the present crisis, despite efforts by Government, lenders, and others to thwart that, but let's have a proper balance in commentary.

Yours etc,

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