

## Letter sent to the Irish Times 11<sup>th</sup> September 2014

Dear Editor,

Kitty Holland's article about landlords and Rent Supplement (State spending €15m a month on Rent Supplement to private landlords, September 11) carries a most misleading headline to compound the gross misleading of the text. There is an almost categorical statement that private landlords are the sole beneficiaries of the Government's Rent Supplement scheme, but that suggestion is not only way out of line, but is factually incorrect.

Rent Supplement is paid to the tenant, and only directly to landlords in very limited circumstances - and then only with the express consent of the tenant. In fact, Department of Social Protection rules state explicitly that Rent Supplement is the tenant's entitlement. We don't say that Jobseekers Assistance belongs to the local supermarket, or the local pub. The same goes for Lone Parents Allowance, Carers Allowance, and the whole host of social benefits.

Private landlords provide accommodation for those who do not have the financial strength to house themselves and are actually partners with the State whose responsibility it is to house needy citizens. Rent Supplement is a relatively cheap and handy way of providing people who qualify with financial assistance to rent accommodation. Most landlords have a mortgage on the property, and are offering an asset with a potential value of several hundred thousand euro to their customer, the tenant. It is the landlord who takes the risk in such arrangements and it is the landlord who has to deal with the whole myriad of regulations and unfair taxation, while the tenant can effectively walk away owing arrears of rent (which will often have been subsidised by the State, but not paid to the landlord).

As an important segment of the entire housing market, the least landlords expect is that news stories will be adequately balanced and researched.

Yours, etc.

Stephen Faughnan  
Chairman

**IRISH PROPERTY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION  
ASHTOWN BUSINESS CENTRE,  
NAVAN ROAD.  
DUBLIN 15.**

**TEL: 01-8276000**    [WWW.IPOA.IE](http://WWW.IPOA.IE)