

News Release

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STFA WELCOMES POSITIVE MOVES TOWARDS TENANCY REFORM

The Scottish Tenant Farmers Association welcomes the support for the tenanted sector expressed at the NFUS AGM by both president Nigel Miller and Cabinet Secretary Richard Lochhead.

Speaking afterwards, STFA chairman Angus McCall said: "For a long time now STFA has been highlighting the very real concerns and frustrations of tenant farmers. Despite the cross industry talks over several years now in the TFF, no real progress has been made and this was confirmed by recent government statistics showing the sector is contracting alarmingly with few genuine opportunities for those starting on the farming ladder.

The "road map" initiative announced by NFUS President Nigel Miller this week is a positive step forward to arrest further decline within a limited timescale yet to be agreed. This has been backed by statements from the Cabinet Secretary and sends out a powerful message that stagnation and contraction will be addressed.

The recent decision on the Moonzie rent case by the Court of Session may prove a catalyst for tenancy reform. The fundamental differences in interpretation of the legislation by two senior law courts demonstrate that current tenancy law is simply not fit for purpose.

There is an urgent need to reform rent review rules so they are simple, clear and unambiguous and reflect parliamentary intention. Many tenants continue to feel frustrated and angry as expensive and lengthy cases rumble on and on.

Despite this, the outcome of the Moonzie Appeal has given rise to some landlord advisers publicly speculating that rents will now be under further upward pressure. This is not helpful and will only increase tension between landlords and tenants.

The call for a tenancy road map by NFUS President Nigel Miller acknowledges the dire straits the sector is now in. There are many burning issues such as rent reviews, codes of practice, investment in holdings, waygo compensation, and succession which need to be addressed quickly. STFA has been flagging up the issues and welcomes these calls to review and overhaul a system which is plainly not working.

For further information  
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