

Homelessness Minister Resigns Over Property Rent Increase Claims

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Homelessness Minister Rushanara Ali resigns after allegations she evicted tenants from her East London property before relisting it weeks later with a £700 monthly rent rise, prompting public criticism and political pressure.

Rushanara Ali tendered her resignation to Prime Minister Keir Starmer, stating she had complied with all legal requirements but believed her continued role risked distracting from the government's housing agenda. In her letter, she said she took her ministerial responsibilities seriously and was stepping aside to prevent further disruption to public service priorities.

The controversy stems from a property Ali owns in East London. Four tenants were informed in November 2024 that their fixed-term contracts would not be renewed because the property was to be sold. After the tenants moved out, the property was placed back on the rental market at £4,000 per month, an increase from its previous £3,300 rate. The incident drew attention due to Ali's previous campaigning for stronger tenant protections and against exploitative landlord practices.

Housing charities, including Shelter, and political figures from across the spectrum condemned the move. Conservative Party Chair Kevin Hollinrake described the actions as inconsistent with Ali's public stance on renters' rights. Ali's office responded by stating that the tenants had remained for the full term of their contracts and were given the option to stay beyond that period, which they declined.

The resignation comes just as the government prepares to introduce the Renters' Rights Bill, a measure aimed at banning practices such as ending tenancies under the pretext of selling a property, only to relist it at a higher rent. Critics have argued that the allegations against Ali risk undermining the credibility of that legislation.

Prime Minister Starmer accepted Ali's resignation, thanking her for her work and expressing confidence that she would continue to contribute as

a backbench MP. Chancellor Rachel Reeves defended Ali's legal compliance but acknowledged the distraction her position had created.

The episode highlights growing scrutiny over political integrity and the expectation that ministers' personal conduct aligns with their public policy positions, particularly in sensitive areas such as housing and tenant rights.