**Media release**

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**Housing policy failing families and state’s most vulnerable**

Almost half of all low-income households in Queensland are suffering from housing stress due to a failure of governments to address the issue.

Despite a 13 per cent increase in federal funding over the past seven years, Queensland continues to lag behind the rest of the country in supplying social and affordable housing according to the state’s peak body for community housing providers (CHPs).

Chair of CHPs for Queensland, Josephine Ahern said the issue is of vital importance to Queensland but one that’s probably not on the political radar of parties during the current campaign.

“As a result, CHPs for Queensland has written to each party asking them to fully outline their policies aimed at tackling the state’s crisis in affordable housing provision,” Ms Ahern said.

“Affordable housing stocks in Queensland are at a critical level and an immediate investment in affordable housing supply is required.

“There are currently 29,000 Queenslanders on the waiting list for social housing and a recent study suggests we will need at least a further 50,000 affordable dwellings over the next decade.

“We believe affordable housing is a basic human right and we can’t just keep putting band-aids on what has become a gaping wound.

“We are calling for visionary leadership with polices that are focussed on delivering a contemporary Housing Sector that meets the needs of Queenslanders today and into the future.

 “A major contributor to the problem is the lack of investment from all levels of government into this sector over many years.”

Ms Ahern said this was despite the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreeing that a greater percentage of community housing should be managed by the non-government sector.

“COAG agreed 35 per cent of housing stock should be transferred to community housing management,” Ms Ahern said. “We believe this should increase to 100 per cent over the next 10 years.

“Adding such a policy would provide innovation and greater investment in housing solutions and maximise the impact of federal Community Rent Assistance subsidies that are unavailable to state government.

“Many CHPs are successful businesses in their own right and we need commitment from government that CHPs are the future of social and affordable housing delivery. Past models, while successful in their day, are no longer suitable to meet the current housing demands of communities across Queensland.

“CHPs are better positioned to provide affordable housing than traditional housing models.

“They have access to additional federal and charity funding that is not available to the state government such as the federal government’s Community Rent Assistance subsidies.”

Ms Ahern said CHPs also provide additional support services to tenants that government cannot match.

“The Federal Assistant Minister to the Treasurer stated recently that for every dollar government invested in CHPs the industry invested two dollars. Conversely, for every dollar government spent on public housing the return was just 50 cents,” Ms Ahern said.

“In the next parliament, it is vital all parties work together to ensure greater investment and innovation by utilising community housing models.

“We need a bi-partisan approach to housing policy to urgently address the crisis in social affordable housing and affordable living.

“We want the next state government to introduce legislation that helps CHPs secure finance to invest in the sector, changes to planning laws to encourage inclusionary zoning provisions and provide subsidies to assist in improving the environmental performance of the current stock to make it more sustainable and provide direct economic benefit to tenants.

“We need the next state government to get behind our efforts and make a real difference to ordinary working Queenslanders who rent as well as the most vulnerable in our society.”

Ends.

**For more information contact:**

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**About CHPs for QLD**

CHPs for QLD seeks to deliver positive influence at industry, government and private sector levels in order to improve housing options for Queenslanders, ensure a robust social and affordable housing market, and secure the role of community housing providers. We are community minded and future driven.

CHPs for QLD is a non-profit, independent, member-led organisation. CHPs for QLD membership includes Tiers 1, 2 and 3 community housing providers from around the state and welcomes participation from affiliated organisations that support the goals of community housing and CHPs for QLD.