



MEDIA RELEASE

20/12/17

Impact of new housing agreement under threat

The ability of a new National Housing and Homelessness Agreement to deliver an increase in social housing will be reduced by the Federal Government's decision to withdraw \$6.5 million to monitor its effectiveness, the peak body for community housing has warned.

CEO of the Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA), Peta Winzar says the old National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) did not deliver more social housing because of a lack of transparency and she fears the new agreement will meet the same fate.

Assistant Minister to the Treasurer, Michael Sukkar MP, told a meeting of community housing providers in September: 'The Federal Government contributes \$1.3 billion a year under the NAHA, we have done so for more than a decade...and on virtually every measure in that decade we have seen housing worsen. We have seen social and public housing stock decrease in many jurisdictions.'

Minister Sukkar cited the old agreement's lack of impact as the motivation for creating a new agreement that would require the State's to demonstrate the effectiveness of the funding in adding more social housing stock.

Despite this, the Federal Government's Mid-year Economic and Fiscal Outlook statement has reneged on its commitment to set aside \$6.5m over four years for the National Competition Council to monitor the effectiveness of the new agreement. Instead, the Department of Treasury will be asked to assist with the implementation and ongoing assessment of the new agreement, using existing resources.

'Monitoring this agreement requires a level of expertise in housing,' Ms Winzar says. 'We need to learn lessons from the failings of the old agreement and ensure Federal funds are spent in a way that delivers the safe, affordable and appropriate social housing that is so desperately needed.'

'Perhaps the government could rethink the \$10m it is setting aside for a communications on its housing affordability measures - and direct some of those funds to ensuring the measures are working in a transparent and effective way.'

Ms Winzar is available for further comment on 0419 631 868.