



MEDIA RELEASE

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United call from national housing and homelessness leaders to Federal Government to invest in social housing in pre-Budget Submission

A coalition of national housing and homelessness peak bodies have released their pre-Budget Submissions to the Federal Government with **one united call – invest in social housing as economic stimulus**. The [Social Housing Acceleration and Renovation Program \(SHARP\)](#) underpins all three budget submissions from Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA), National Shelter, and Homelessness Australia.

The Social Housing Acceleration and Renovation Program (SHARP) involves:

1. Wave 1 – social housing maintenance and upgrading
2. Wave 2 – acquisition of sites and properties requiring renovation / completion which are suitable for social housing
3. Wave 3 – shovel ready development projects
4. Wave 4 – longer term new development projects

It calls for total government investment of \$7.7 billion; \$7.2 billion for new build/acquisition and \$500 million for renovation of existing homes. Commonwealth contributions should be complemented by state/territory governments in the form of land and/or capital and local governments may also make a valuable contribution.

Wendy Hayhurst, CEO of CHIA says, "Investing in social housing will quickly provide urgently needed jobs. The SHARP proposal would help rebuild Australia as it recovers from the economic impacts of the pandemic.

"Adopting the SHARP proposal just makes good sense because there is almost infinite demand for social housing, this is a build program that can ramp up quickly and the activity can be targeted where the economic impacts are felt most. It would create thousands of new construction jobs rather than simply bringing forward construction that was already planned.

"The Master Builders latest construction forecasts predict that there will be a 27 per cent fall in home building, which would have massive consequences for employment in an industry that supplies almost one in ten of Australia's jobs.

Adrian Pisarski, CEO at National Shelter says, "Federal governments have a great track record supporting social housing construction. This Federal Government can



lead again and use their fiscal fire power to increase contributions from the states and territories via the National Cabinet's new housing committee. What a great way for the housing committee to show it means business.

"This proposal requires a significant financial commitment but the return on investment is at least double and the benefits go well beyond housing. Modelling by SGS Economics and Planning demonstrates SHARP should raise output in Australia by at least \$15.7 billion over the four years of construction, and increase GDP by anywhere between \$5.8 to \$6.7 billion, which would offset most of SHARP's initial cost".

Jenny Smith, Chair of Homelessness Australia says, "SHARP will deliver 30,000 high quality energy efficient homes over four years and create 18,000 new jobs each year, while delivering enormous social good and combatting homelessness.

"Even before the pandemic, over 116,000 Australians were without a home every single night and 811,000 Australian households were paying more for rent than they could afford. Now with growing unemployment, and cuts coming to Centrelink payments, homelessness is set to skyrocket, unless the Federal Government uses the opportunity provided by economic stimulus right now.

Kate Colvin, spokesperson for national housing campaign, Everybody's Home says, "The Federal Government has the power to both reduce unemployment and combat homelessness by investing in SHARP to build the social housing Australia so urgently needs."

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The CHIA Pre-Budget Submission is available [here](#)

The National Shelter Pre-Budget Submission is available [here](#)

*The Homelessness Australia Pre-Budget Submission is **attached***