



Social housing package must pass

EMBARGO: 2100, Sunday 18 June

As advocates for social housing and homelessness service providers, and industry we wish to collectively express our gratitude to the parliamentarians who have strengthened three pieces of legislation aimed at addressing Australia's deep and considerable housing challenge.

The [Housing Australia Future Fund Bill 2023](#), [National Housing Supply and Affordability Council Bill 2023](#) and the [Treasury Laws Amendment \(Housing Measures No. 1\) Bill 2023](#) will go further and do more for Australians in need, thanks to amendments that guarantee annual dispersal of at least \$500 million per year for the construction of social and affordable housing.

Time is now of the essence. The parliament rises for the winter break this Thursday and will not resume until August. Australia can not afford to delay its response to the housing crisis any longer.

Household budgets are being squeezed by rising interest rates and rents. In the last year, [rent on a typical home](#) is up 22.8 per cent in Sydney, 21 per cent in Melbourne, 15.5 per cent in Brisbane, 12 per cent in Adelaide, 18.9 per cent in Perth. UNSW City Futures Research Centre analysts have found [640,000 Australians are in housing stress with the number tipped to hit one million by 2041](#). The National Shelter Rental Affordability Index showed a 14 per cent decline in rental affordability in the last year, with an even steeper decline in affordability for lower income households.

This is the worst housing crisis in living memory and the time has now come to pass this legislation. The new institutions it will create, such as Housing Australia and the Housing Supply Affordability Council need to start their important work. We need a robust national response that has a significant expansion of social and affordable housing as its central pillar. We also need better planning systems for our cities and the roll out of annual state housing targets for social, affordable and at-market housing through the national housing accord.

As advocates, we intend to build upon the new legislation by campaigning for additional resources in the years ahead. We know that the current legislation on its own will not fix the housing crisis. But it does create the institutions necessary to make a start. We consider this package a floor, not a ceiling.

This is especially true for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, whose housing needs have been consistently neglected, leading to severe overcrowding and poor health.

The time for repairing our housing system has arrived.

Contact: Nick Lucchinelli 0422 229 032 or Matt Coughlan 0400 561 480