



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**PROOF**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**Housing**

**SPEECH**

**Monday, 4 September 2023**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

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<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Responder</b>
<b>Speaker</b> Khalil, Peter MP	<b>Question No.</b>

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**Mr KHALIL** (Wills) (10:30): Housing is one of those public policy areas that beats with a very deeply personal heart for many of us. I remember every flat, apartment and house I've lived in, and, while I certainly remember our public housing commission flat as being a bit rough, I feel fortunate that I and my family were given that opportunity by many Labor governments, frankly, who provided my migrant family an opportunity with that first all-important place to call home. Without access to public housing, I wouldn't be where I am today. I'm also keenly aware that it was easier to make that journey in the 1980s and nineties than it is right now.

We need a roof over our heads to engage in our community, to fully participate at school, to look for and get a job, to work and to contribute. It's about dignity and it's about opportunity, and it gave my family the security that allowed my sister and me to pursue our education and give back to our country, which had given us and continues to give us so much. This is the reality I want for the community that I represent. I know this is the reality the Prime Minister wants for all Australians. Housing insecurity causes immense stress to people across my community and across Australia. For the young family trying to manage alongside childcare fees, for the university student juggling study with part-time work, for older Australians relying on their pension or superannuation, housing affordability and rental stress are issues that cut across all our electorates and our communities.

How did we get to a point where so many Australian have lost hope in the Australian dream? There are lots of reasons. Taxation settings, planning laws that restrict housing in appropriate areas and a lack of government investment in public and social housing over decades have all been contributing factors. But let's not let this be a free pass for the failures of the previous Liberal-National government who for nine years oversaw an increase in housing construction costs—46 per cent over a decade. Scott Morrison, the former prime minister, infamously said he didn't believe in leaving a legacy. Well, he left a legacy of higher house prices, higher rents and greater housing stress, a legacy that has left so many Australians unable to buy their own home. I welcome the member for Wentworth's motion noting the positive work the Albanese government has already undertaken. In just our first year housing has been front of mind in terms of both affordability and supply. At the recent National Cabinet meeting the Albanese government committed to build over one million new homes, adding a \$3 billion new homes bonus and a \$500 million housing support program. At the same National Cabinet meeting we secured a better deal for renters with regard to rent increases and evictions and much more.

Earlier this year the Prime Minister announced federal funding of \$2 billion to the Social Housing Accelerator, which has already been delivering to states and territories to start building new social homes. We have also increased the maximum of Commonwealth rent assistance by 15 per cent, the largest increase in over 30 years. There's also been the work done with states and territories on the Help to Buy SCHEME, which will support up to 40,000 low- and middle-income families to purchase their own home and cut the cost of buying a home by up to 40 per cent for these Australians. We've expanded the Home Guarantee Scheme eligibility, allowing friends, siblings and other family members to jointly apply. This will help Australians to own their home. This will help Australians with their rental stress. This will help Australians access housing because it's about supply.

But let's not forget the importance of the National Housing and Homelessness Plan with its \$1.7 billion to support frontline homelessness services throughout Australia with the essential work that they do, and next year the states and territory will see a collective \$67 million boost to homelessness funding. The government also has the National Housing Infrastructure Facility, which is investing \$575 million to build homes today. I encourage and call on the other place to support our \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund because it will ensure that 30,000 social and affordable new homes are built over the next five years.

There has been a lot of action in this space in our first year and a half of government, and there will be more. This government is committed to increasing supply, and all the policies I've just outlined demonstrate that commitment in real action. We believe in the fundamental human right that is housing, and in getting the balance right. For too long housing has become more of an investment vehicle in some respects, because of those settings, rather than a fundamental human right and a starting point to enable families to make their contribution to Australia. That's

what was given to my family almost 50 years ago—the opportunity to get a good start in life through housing. It's a fundamental need, and this government is committed to it.