



Speech By  
**Hon. Yvette D'Ath**


**MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Homelessness

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (7.25 pm): I rise this evening to talk about an important issue around homelessness. After the recent federal election, the local federal member for Petrie, Luke Howarth, was afforded the privilege of being Assistant Minister for Community Housing, Homelessness and Community Services for which I congratulate him. However, very shortly upon taking up that important position, Mr Howarth spoke about homelessness saying—

We have 99½ percent of our Australians homed and living in safe places. There's half a percent of the population that isn't. We want to make sure that that half a per cent are in homes as quickly as possible and we're doing what we can to get out there and talk to people in the sector and find out how we do it. You know, I want to put a positive spin on it as well as not just say that, you know, Australia's in a housing crisis when it affects a very, very small percentage of the population.

On ABC Radio National Mr Howarth acknowledged that the population from the last census over the previous one increased by almost 20 per cent and that now there are about 116,000 homeless people in Australia. I do not know how we put a positive spin on that. To say that 99.5 per cent of us are not homeless and that we should celebrate that ignores the 116,000 people, including in my local area and in Luke Howarth's area, living rough and homeless. Also, this idea of just quickly getting them into homes ignores the fact that there are underlying factors—mental health, addiction, domestic and family violence, poverty—and there is no acknowledgement of these issues that need to be dealt with when talking about homelessness.

In fact, on *Sky News* Mr Howarth suggested that community housing and homelessness were separate issues despite his title being Assistant Minister for Community Housing, Homelessness and Community Services. I beg the member for Petrie to talk to our local providers, who I know reach out to him. He should listen to what they are saying. He should listen to what we as a community are saying. It is not just about putting a roof over your head. We have to look at the underlying factors about why people become homeless. There is never anything positive about someone sleeping rough or being homeless. We need to do everything to support them. The Commonwealth needs to fund housing properly and deal with homelessness in this state.