




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR NOOSA

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Housing Affordability

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (2.41 pm): Among the issues that Queenslanders want addressed, none has been so consistent and unresolvable as the basic human right to shelter. I am standing here to plea for united action on affordable housing given its major contributing role to homelessness, poor wellbeing, domestic violence and growing insecurity, especially in our COVID recovery. We have made small progress; however, it is not nearly enough, quickly enough. The federal government and CEDA agree that it is an urgency. Even political commentators are on board.

What does it take to finally resolve it? Here is a simple suggestion. We did it 50 years ago and my community has them: yes, demountable villages, much loved by those who live in them. The fact is that with one single stroke of the pen we could deliver fourfold on current efforts for the same price just by taking a leaf from the past and we could get on with creating intentional living projects. Statistics do not reflect the reality of those living under housing stress and duress, as they do not qualify for social housing. Even if they did, we still would not know how many, as we have been advised that Queensland no longer operates a social housing waitlist.

There is also no mechanism to capture those workers seeking community housing which is for those whose wages are insufficient to meet rents or mortgages in high-cost regions such as Noosa, where our key industries of hospitality, aged and disability care are reliant on 457 visa holders to deliver services. This is not part of a sustainable economic plan. Yes, there is funding if you have shovel-ready projects, but when the land is too expensive, as it is in Noosa, where to then? Yes, surplus government land. When you finally locate that land the reviews and processes are extensive, ending up with a list of why we cannot versus how we can. The reasons provided are the same that have led us to this crisis in the first place.

Private-public partnerships have been attempted to address the growing plight of our over-55s women, yet a one-bedder unit would roughly cost \$550,000. If that is affordable, to whom is it affordable? I will say it again: we should be ashamed at all levels of government. We have youngsters, returned service people and those displaced from their jobs due to COVID who would line up for traineeships building fabulous eco designer units, cabins, demountables and tiny homes—intentional community projects designed by those who will live there that can deliver on all fronts in terms of what is being sought, and that is for homes and jobs and wellbeing. For 30 years the same issue has been predominant in my community. I have initiated a project action group, with its inaugural meeting on 29 September, and I look forward to the support of government in what emerges from this. There can be no more excuses, especially in this land of plenty.