




Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Federal Budget, Housing

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (10.02 am): Queensland is a great place to live, and over the past year many more Australians have realised that and are making the decision to move here. While we welcome other Aussies moving to Queensland, this has meant additional demand in the private rental market. This comes at a time when the Australian government is ceasing funding to the National Rental Affordability Scheme and turning its back on vulnerable Queenslanders experiencing housing stress, so in tonight's federal budget we want to see our fair share in housing support.

NRAS is an Australian government initiative which provides subsidies on properties which allow tenants to receive at least a 20 per cent discount on market rent. In Queensland alone there were 10,244 approved homes at the peak, many of these in regional communities. Losing any form of housing assistance across our regional areas and in our cities will affect housing affordability in already tight rental markets. The remaining NRAS properties in Queensland will exit the scheme by mid-2025 with the majority ending in the 2022-23 and 2023-24 periods. This means that over the next four years more than 9,000 properties will likely leave the affordable housing market. This uncertainty is creating anxiety for tenants who want longer term security.

We are expecting our housing service centres will see a significant increase in demand between 2022 and 2025 from customers exiting NRAS. As a frontline human service, the department works with all customers to connect them with services that address their specific needs. Over 54,650 households have been supported since early 2020 including 7,507 allocations to social housing. In addition to the private rental market assistance, we are also building more social and affordable housing ourselves with the largest investment in social housing since World War II.

Through the Housing Construction Jobs Program, we are investing \$1.6 billion to build more than 5,500 social and affordable homes across Queensland. Since the HCJP started, contracts have been awarded for the commencement of 2,238 new social housing homes across Queensland, with 1,415 already completed. An additional 659 new affordable homes are also being delivered. In addition, the Works for Tradies initiative will see the commencement of a further 215 homes by the end of 2021.

The Palaszczuk government is doing the heavy lifting while Scott Morrison and the LNP are walking away from their responsibilities to Queenslanders. In the federal budget tonight, Scott Morrison needs to step up and ensure Queensland gets its fair share of housing support. In the meantime, the Palaszczuk government will continue to work towards positive housing outcomes for all Queenslanders in need.