




Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

Record of Proceedings, 12 May 2021

MOTION

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (5.28 pm): I rise to oppose the motion moved by the member for Maroochydore. Today the House has heard all the ways in which the Morrison government's federal budget has let Queenslanders down. For many years we have been calling on the Morrison government to shoulder its responsibility and invest in rental affordability initiatives, social housing and remote Indigenous housing. Disappointingly, last night's budget contained no new money for social housing, nothing for those experiencing rental stress and no new money for those at risk of homelessness. In response to the federal budget, National Shelter said—

In housing terms, Budget 21/22 dangerously adds pressure to markets while ignoring real needs in social and affordable housing.

In the context of this federal budget, the opposition has come into the House today completely oblivious to the shortcomings of its own federal colleagues. We have seen no effort from the federal LNP to fund new social housing or assist with rental affordability. They have walked away from those who are most in need of housing support. They have turned their back on vulnerable people who cannot afford to buy a house and are struggling to pay the rent right now.

Once again the Palaszczuk government is doing the heavy lifting when it comes to housing in this state. I am happy to spend some time tonight talking once again about the facts and the figures in regard to affordable housing. The member for Glass House made a few comments about this. Our Partnering for Growth initiative is a \$136.9 million investment, working in partnership with the community housing sector to deliver new affordable housing. Through this initiative 1,121 social and affordable homes have been approved and 124 are already complete. Our \$1.6 billion Housing Construction Jobs Program represents the biggest investment in social housing since World War II and will deliver 5,500 social housing and affordable homes. We have invested \$241 million in the 2020-21 budget alone to improve housing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders, including those living in remote communities. Every day our housing service centres provide bond loans, RentConnect support and rental grants to support Queenslanders to enter the private rental market.

This motion makes the ridiculous claim that our government is somehow failing to meet our own targets for new social housing dwellings. This is simply incorrect. In fact, we are exceeding our targets. Under the Housing Construction Jobs Program we committed to a target of more than 1,700 commencements by 30 June 2020. Not only did we meet that target for new social housing homes; we exceeded it with contracts awarded for 1,949 new homes by June last year. We are now up to 2,238 contracts awarded for commencement and 1,423 of these homes have already been completed. We are on track to meet our five-year target.

In the Bundamba electorate we are investing \$6.2 million in a complex at Redbank. In the Mundingburra electorate we are investing \$3.6 million in new apartments in Aitkenvale, and we are building properties in Bonney, Kawana, Coomera, Whitsunday and the list goes on. There are a further

240 new social housing homes forecast for commencement across Queensland by the end of next month. Under the Works for Tradies program we are on track to see the commencement of 215 homes right across Queensland by the end of 2021. We have already awarded contracts for new social housing homes across South-East Queensland, Wide Bay, Mackay-Whitsunday, Townsville, Darling Downs, Central and Far North Queensland.

Having said all that, it is important to point out that under the Newman LNP government in 2012-13 and in 2013-14 construction did not commence on a single new social home on the Gold Coast, Ipswich, Logan or the Sunshine Coast. It was their stated goal, under the leadership of the member for Everton, to transfer 90 per cent of social housing away from government. That is his legacy.

Mr Mander: Yes, exactly!

Ms ENOCH: Those opposite have no credibility on this issue when their own record in government was so appalling. I hear the member for Everton continuing to spruik the idea of privatising social housing. See how that went last time. It did not do too well.

Mr MANDER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at that statement because it is untrue. I have already written to the Speaker about the minister misleading the House on that matter.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Minister, the member has taken personal offence and I ask you to withdraw.

Ms ENOCH: I withdraw. In last night's budget the federal LNP turned its back on the most vulnerable people who need support to keep a roof over their head. The Palaszczuk government is continuing to do the heavy lifting to increase the supply of social housing, but we need the federal government to step up. I oppose this motion.