




Speech By
Charis Mullen

MEMBER FOR JORDAN

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HOUSING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (3.52 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. It is undeniable that across Australia and indeed the world we are in the midst of a significant housing shortage. The truth is that the market will simply not provide enough affordable and social housing without a suite of legislative and financial policy mechanisms from all levels of government. The bill before us provides the mechanism for one particular measure that has found success in other states and is worthy of implementation in Queensland.

It was misleading and, frankly, mischievous of the member for South Brisbane to say that this bill is the government's solution to housing in our state. I do not know how you forget \$3.9 billion, but the member for South Brisbane has, so I will remind her. It is \$3.9 billion, the largest concentrated investment in social and affordable housing in Queensland's history. Perhaps it is easy to forget \$3.9 billion when it does not fit your narrative. The Greens cannot have it both ways. They are anti development but they want more housing. They want governments to do more, but will not support the federal government's legislation to establish the \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund. Give me a break! The high moral ground is of no use to those who need affordable housing in our communities. We cannot all encourage illegal squatting like a certain Brisbane city councillor does. We must also be open to all solutions to address our housing shortages in the state. This is just one measure.

Amendments to the Housing Act 2003 and Housing Regulation 2015 will allow the recording of an administrative advice noting the existence of a voluntary donation deed on the property title. This will signify the owner intends to donate a portion of the sale price of their property to Homes for Homes, a not-for-profit organisation established by the Big Issue for the purchase of social and affordable housing in Queensland. Most people in our communities would be aware of the Big Issue. It is one of Australia's largest and most successful social enterprises, providing marginalised people with a means to work and earn. They have now turned their minds to this vital area of housing. Over the next 30 years, Homes for Homes aims to raise more than \$1 billion for social and affordable housing. The program works generally through the signing of a donation deed, after which a caveat is lodged on the property title. On settlement, the donation is made to Homes for Homes as part of the disbursement process.

In preparation for this bill, I read an opinion piece by University of Queensland researchers Professor Cameron Parsell and Dr Ella Kuskoff. In the article, they outline that many people want to help those struggling with affordable housing, but there are currently very few means to provide people with the help to access the affordable housing they require. Innovative finance and development models are needed to empower communities to fulfil their desire to help by contributing to the development and delivery of new affordable housing stock.

Our government is committed to looking at all available models and working with communities, industry and the housing sector. Our build-to-rent program is a very exciting model and I was very pleased to see the Treasurer's announcement this morning of new and significant tax incentives to increase affordable housing stock through this program. We already have a number of pilots underway and I am confident we will see more of this type of development.

Prior to entering parliament I sat on the board of a Queensland superannuation fund and I was also on the fund's investment committee. It was a little perplexing to me at the time that our fund was investing members' money in social homes in the United Kingdom. When I questioned why we were not investing the funds into Australian or Queensland social housing, we were advised that there was no mechanism nationally or at any state level for this to happen. So I am particularly excited by what we will be able to achieve with our government's Housing Investment Fund. I see that the opposition clearly do not support the fund; they are already whingeing and whining about it. I am sure they have got their garden shears out ready to prune.

The \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund will provide an ongoing and sustainable pool of funding, estimated at around \$130 million every year for subsidies, one-off capital grants and other supports to encourage developers, builders, community housing providers, tenancy managers, institutional investors and superannuation funds to partner and develop, finance and operate social and affordable housing across our state. It is a genuine market-led process and we are already seeing significant interest in participation in the scheme, which is being led by Queensland Treasury. In fact, there were over 300 attendees at the most recent industry briefing. The first major agreement through the Housing Investment Fund has been inked, which will see up to 1,200 new social and affordable homes via a partnership between the housing provider Brisbane Housing Company, the Queensland Investment Corporation and Australian Retirement Trust.

Our government recognises that homelessness or the risk of homelessness can take its toll on mental and physical health, education and employment prospects, resulting in greater dependence on welfare. On this side of the House we will do absolutely everything we can to ensure people in our communities have a safe and secure place they can call home. I commend the bill to the House.