




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR COOPER

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HOUSING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (3.09 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill. I think the point has been well made that the housing demands on all levels of government in every jurisdiction in Australia are extraordinarily high. Just last week, results from suburb trends showed that three of the top five suburbs in Brisbane for housing undersupply are in my electorate so I am certainly alive to the fact that people are feeling pressure at the moment.

Population trends are a major contributor to this. If we look at Australia's housing trends against comparator jurisdictions, Australia's population is growing at twice the rate of the USA and two-thirds the rate of the UK. Many jurisdictions—jurisdictions like Japan, Italy and Germany—are experiencing population decline. Australia is facing extraordinary population pressures and certainly feeling growing pains.

Queensland has particularly felt the brunt of it with over 30,000 people moving to Queensland last financial year alone. Through our strong health response through COVID and securing major international events like the Olympics, everyone wants a piece of Queensland—and who can blame them. It is pretty clear that this has put our state's services, in particular our housing, health and education services, under unprecedented pressure.

Housing is a human right. I am sure all members have felt deeply frustrated and deeply anxious for those who are struggling to find a secure and appropriate home in their budget and in their preferred suburb, or in fact to find a secure home at all. I will refer to the Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027 because not only does this strategy aim to adjust those policy levers to respond to housing pressures, but of relevance the bill delivers against this strategy by addressing two key objectives. Those objectives are boosting the supply of social and affordable housing and private sector investment in Queensland through enabling a charitable donation deed model through the Homes for Homes initiative and increasing consumer protections and transparency in financial reporting in retirement villages.

The Queensland Housing Strategy is a whole-of-government response to housing needs. It needs a holistic approach and requires us to think differently about how we respond to Queensland's housing pressures. Queenslanders have different interests and different expectations of government.

In my electorate many of us are sensitive to development applications and yet we all acknowledge the desperate need for safe, appealing and affordable housing. We want to protect our natural assets and retain our green spaces. Simultaneously, we want to manage urban sprawl and ensure that our suburbs retain their character. It is complex work, but those interests do not have to be mutually exclusive. I believe the Labor government, through initiatives like the recent Housing Summit, is the government that can continue to bring all of these stakeholders and all sides of the conversation together to navigate this clear and inclusive path forward.

The bill focuses on two areas within the housing mix: affordable housing, and in particular private investment and the backing of that, and housing security for our retirees. The bill proposes amendments to the Housing Act 2003 and the Housing Regulation to allow the recording of an administrative advice

noting the existence of a voluntary donation deed on the property title. The donation deed signifies the owner intends to donate a portion of the sale price of their property to Homes for Homes—a non-profit organisation established by the Big Issue for the purchase of social and affordable houses in Queensland.

Homes for Homes is an independent, not-for-profit company that raises funds to provide social and affordable housing through people making a tax deductible 0.1 per cent donation from the sale of their property. This initiative generates private sector revenue to invest in social and affordable housing projects by securing voluntary donations from landowners, including developers, upon the sale of a participating property.

The Homes for Homes initiative is consistent with the Housing Strategy objective of boosting the supply of affordable housing. It creates opportunities for multiple investors and helps focus private sector investment into pro-social areas. I am certainly looking forward to seeing how the initiative rolls out and what it can deliver for housing in Queensland.

In relation to the bill's response to retirees, the bill aims to strengthen public confidence and enhance financial transparency in the retirement village industry. Issues about financial transparency and accountability constitute a high volume of village resident complaints made to the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy as well as compliance work with operators, and disputes bought under the Retirement Villages Act, including through the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Reforms to improve the transparency, accountability and consistency of village financial reporting commenced in late 2019, with amendments made in the housing legislation amendment act. These reforms are well researched and have been consulted on extensively. They aim to provide greater security and certainty to our older Queenslanders. Again, I look forward to seeing those outcomes. I commend the bill to the House.