




Speech By
Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR HILL

Record of Proceedings, 28 March 2023

HOUSING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (4.12 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The policy objective of the bill is to meet the Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027 10-year framework to ensure Queenslanders have access to safe, secure and affordable housing, along with other strategies. This is a mighty grand statement. However, it is too little too late and should have been introduced 10 years ago. Just like youth crime, the government has been very slow to take up any form of action. Instead of using foresight and forward planning, the government is now scrambling to fix an issue it should have known was coming a decade ago.

As has already been mentioned, families are living in cars, living in sheds, living on the streets and living in tents. Farmers have even told us that families will pull up with kids in the car and ask them if they could rent out their sheds or barns at the back of their farms, so this is a massively serious issue and we are sick and tired of hearing the blame game passed on to everywhere else, including the previous federal and state governments. The ducking, weaving and hiding on taking responsibility for delivering the basic right for every Queenslander to have a roof over their head is absolutely astonishing. Every electorate office has been pounded with the housing issue. I would say that this has been the biggest issue in my office and I would suggest that it is probably the biggest issue in electorate offices right across Queensland, coupled with the youth crime issue. The public has had a gutful. The government must take responsibility and move heaven and earth to fix the housing crisis.

The state government has committed almost \$4 billion in total to social and affordable housing and at the Queensland Housing Summit in October the Housing Investment Fund was boosted to \$2 billion to support a revised target of 5,600 social and affordable homes commencing across Queensland by 30 July 2027, with annual funding of \$130 million available. That is a significant investment. However, with a second housing summit today, what has been delivered? Exactly how many new dwellings have been delivered? How many have been and will be constructed in North Queensland?

When asked this week how many new affordable houses have been delivered, the Premier could not provide an answer except to advise that \$10 million has been given to the NGOs, 'so you'll have to ask them'. How about the government tells that to the mother—and this is in my electorate—of Naryma Lawson from Tully, whose family has been living in a shed for six months despite a combined income of \$1,600 a week? She does not want to hear excuses or shifting the blame. Naryma wants to see action and the details on exactly what is being delivered from this supposed expenditure.

It is not only affordability that is the problem; it is also the availability of housing that is at a critical point. I had met with the government and put forward options to fund and build affordable housing in North Queensland, including dome homes and the affordable homes development at Tully, almost a year ago. These are locally designed and built to withstand the tough weather conditions in the north and can be delivered at a fraction of the cost of standard housing. This was recommended over a year ago, yet nothing has been done. However, of course, funding was provided to the Gold Coast's

ModnPods last year while North Queensland has again been completely and absolutely ignored. Queenslanders do not want more summits. They do not want more media spin. They do not want more blame game. They want action now. I wanted to bring all of those issues to the attention of the House.