




Speech By
Hon. Charis Mullen

MEMBER FOR JORDAN

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HELP TO BUY (COMMONWEALTH POWERS) BILL

 **Hon. C MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (4.59 pm): I hear there are lots of people looking to buy or rent houses in Woolloongabba; wouldn't that be good? I rise to support the Help to Buy (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2024. This bill will support those who want to buy their own home, specifically our low- and middle-income earners. Owning a home should not be out of reach for young people or lower income earners. Our Homes for Queenslanders plan is part of the work we are doing with the federal government to get the Commonwealth's Help to Buy scheme up and running as quickly as possible.

The Commonwealth scheme aims to support up to 10,000 eligible Australians into home ownership through an equity contribution of up to 40 per cent for a new home and 30 per cent for an existing home. Homebuyers will need a minimum two per cent deposit to take part in the scheme. Up to 10,000 households nationally could benefit each year, meaning about 2,000 Queensland households a year over the next four years. Deposit costs will be less and repayments easier to meet. For this to happen, states and territories need to refer matters to the Commonwealth. This bill will do just that and puts Queensland in the box seat as the first state to participate.

I commend the Minister for Housing on taking this initiative forward, because it will mean Queenslanders will be able to access the scheme as soon as the Commonwealth has it up and running. We know that incentives such as this make a massive difference to people. We have already doubled the first home owner's grant to \$30,000 for new homes until 30 June next year—the most generous in Australia. It is estimated that that will support about 12,000 into a home before the deadline.

I was with the then premier, the then deputy premier and the Treasurer when we announced that scheme at a display village in Spring Mountain. I recall the Treasurer and I walking through one of the display homes where we met Sandy, a woman in her 40s who worked for Health. We were having a chat about how lovely the display home was. She recognised the then deputy premier and the Treasurer and said, 'Oh, what are you doing here?' We announced the fact that we had doubled the first home owner's grant to \$30,000. She actually paused and said, 'Are you serious? That can't be right?' I said, 'Yes, we just announced that today.' She said, 'I've been looking at this display home. It is one that I really wanted, but I just didn't have quite enough money to get over the line to purchase it. Your announcement today will mean that I can actually buy this house.' This was a single mother in her 40s who was able to buy that home. That is what these incentives and these schemes do.

Increasing the threshold for first home owner concessions on transfer duty, from \$500,000 to \$700,000, will see 10,000 buyers supported to unlock their first home. Again, we know that will make a significant difference. This is one of a suite of arrangements to help Queenslanders into their own homes including the Homes for Queenslanders plan, the Our Place: A First Nations Housing and Homelessness Action Plan, and our Sales to Tenants program.

This bill is firmly aimed at helping Queenslanders who very much want to own their own home. It is for our young people, for families such as those in my growing electorate of Jordan—for families in Spring Mountain, Greenbank and Flagstone—and for our community. In fact, it is for anyone who dreams of a place to call their own, because owning a home is not just about real estate; it is about having a place to raise a family, about putting down roots and about becoming part of a community. This is about housing affordability and accessibility.

I know that it is a difficult concept for some whose prevailing attitude to property ownership is more 'How many can I buy?' rather than 'How can I buy one?' It is disappointing that this legislation is not being supported by the Liberals or the Greens in Canberra. I implore those opposite to get on the phone, perhaps do something useful and get their pals to pass the federal legislation. We want to make sure all Queenslanders have a safe and affordable place to call home. We know that this bill will pave the way for thousands into home ownership. It has the capacity to change the trajectory of tens of thousands of lives across generations, just as it is doing for someone like Sandy. I commend the bill to the House.