




Speech By
Hon. Samuel O'Connor
MEMBER FOR BONNEY

Record of Proceedings, 12 December 2024

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Housing and Homelessness

 **Hon. ST O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth) (10.04 am): I rise today to update the House on the concerning state of housing and homelessness in Queensland. New data shows just how bad Queensland's housing crisis is after a decade of Labor. Yesterday the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare released its 2023-24 annual report on specialist homelessness services, which I now table for the benefit of members.

Tabled paper: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report, titled 'Specialist homelessness services annual report 2023-2024' [270](#).

The report reveals deeply troubling statistics. Queensland recorded 11,206 unassisted requests for specialist homelessness support last financial year. That is a 47 per cent increase from the 7,612 requests recorded in 2022-23. This was the largest increase of any state or territory in the nation, far exceeding the average national increase of just 2.1 per cent. Most other states saw decreases; Queensland went up 47 per cent. In total 60,024 Queenslanders sought specialist homelessness support in 2023-24, up 13 per cent in just 12 months from 53,081 people in 2022-23.

The report shows young people are particularly at risk. In 2023-24, we saw 88.6 per 10,000 Queenslanders aged 15 to 26 present for assistance, up from 85.9 the previous year. What were the main reasons these Queenslanders were seeking help? They were: 50 per cent selected financial difficulties, compared to 41 per cent nationally; 48 per cent selected housing affordability stress, compared to 36 per cent nationally; and 43 per cent selected housing crisis, compared to 37 per cent nationally. These figures show the housing pressures young Queenslanders and families across our state are grappling with. They clearly show, despite housing pressures being present across our nation, the housing crisis is undeniably worse in the Queensland that Labor governed for the last decade.

Our government is committed to turning this around and delivering a place to call home for more Queenslanders. This AIHW report further quantifies the extent of the member for Gaven's failures as the former, now shadow, housing minister. Last week my department released the latest social housing register data. This showed 20 additional Queenslanders were added to the social housing waitlist every single day in the September quarter, with the total list now reaching 47,820 people. That is an 11 per cent increase in just a year on the member for Gaven's watch.

This is the consequence of Labor's decade of underinvestment in social housing, which grew just six per cent, far below Queensland's population increase of 16 per cent in the same period. It is a consequence of the community housing sector being shackled by the former Labor government's policy settings which meant community housing grew by only three per cent over the last decade.

One of the solutions put forward by the former Labor government was the Housing Investment Fund. The former, now shadow, housing minister failed to deliver a single newly constructed home from the \$2 billion HIF. Our incoming government brief revealed the Housing Investment Fund will deliver 1,600 fewer homes than Labor promised. Part of the reason for this shortfall is the decision of the former, now shadow, minister to purchase existing housing stock from the private market instead of building new housing—adding fuel to the fire of the Queensland housing crisis.

Under the former, now shadow, minister, the HIF was a cruel hoax. The Crisafulli government is delivering the change Queenslanders voted for. We will work with proponents to make sure the Housing Investment Fund does what it was meant to do by investing every dollar into new homes to add much needed supply. We will deliver 53,500 social and community homes to help our most vulnerable Queenslanders, and we will provide a 20 per cent uplift in funding for specialist homelessness services through to 2027-28.

Every day that I have the privilege to serve as Minister for Housing I will work tirelessly to actually deliver the homes Queenslanders need. Instead of just talking about them, instead of just making announcements and instead of playing politics, we will get things done. Our new government will secure our state's housing foundations to give more Queenslanders a place to call home.