



Speech By  
**Barbara O'Shea**


**MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE**

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Record of Proceedings, 29 October 2025

**MOTION**

**Housing**

 **Dr O'SHEA** (South Brisbane—ALP) (6.11 pm): Housing is the cornerstone for a stable life, to hold down a job, raise your children and give them the opportunity that comes from a good education. However, for many in my community of South Brisbane tonight there is a quiet panic: people lying awake doing the sums realising they are just one rent rise away from homelessness. They cannot afford anything in the private market and they earn too much to qualify for social housing. They are trapped working, paying taxes, contributing to this city and are still unable to find a secure place to live.

Brisbane's home values have surged again this year. The median price is now around \$970,000, one of the highest of any Australian capital. Rents are climbing just as fast. Houses now average \$775 a week and units \$615. Vacancy rates are at crisis levels at just one per cent. For thousands of Queenslanders that means impossible choices between paying rent, food and power bills. It means skipping meals so that kids can eat. What do we see in response from this government? While homelessness continues to rise and affordability continues to collapse, this government has chosen to scrap thousands of affordable homes. This decision increases homelessness, impacts our key workers, pushes up rents and removes hope from our families and young people.

In South Brisbane, just across the river from this House, there are so many people now without a home sleeping in tents in Musgrave Park, under the Kurilpa Bridge, along the banks of the river and in shop doorways along Boundary Street in West End. It is not just single people who are homeless; it is families as well. I would like to table a media report from the *Courier-Mail* on 16 October this year, which states that more than 400 Brisbane families are stuck in emergency motel accommodation and most will be forced to wait more than a year for affordable housing.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Courier-Mail* online, dated 16 October 2025, titled 'Brisbane's childhood homelessness up 50% in a year, forcing families into crisis motels' [1671](#).

It goes on to report that as of 30 June this year over 700 children were living in crisis motel accommodation across Brisbane. That is up nearly 50 per cent since last year. Crisis accommodation was meant to be just that: a temporary stopgap measure for a few nights or weeks at the most. It was never meant to be long-term accommodation, but our motels and other emergency accommodation are filled with people waiting for a home—but there just are not any.

In the middle of this housing crisis with over 53,000 on the public housing waiting list, motels filled with families, our parks and shopfronts full of people forced to sleep rough, this government has decided to scrap over 8,000 affordable homes just in my community of South Brisbane. That is over 3,000 at Woolloongabba, over 4,000 in the suburb of South Brisbane and now another 800 on the state owned Visy Glass factory site. Axing these affordable homes was done either without any community consultation or, in the case of Woolloongabba, in spite of community feedback. These were homes that could have been used by frontline workers like nurses and police who work in our community and should be able to have access to affordable housing so they can live in the community they serve.

With the ever-increasing rents and house prices in Brisbane we have a whole generation of young people living in rental accommodation and working multiple jobs to try to pay the rent. I used to be able to assure those young people that there was hope, that the Labor government had introduced planning laws for 20 per cent affordable homes in developments in Woolloongabba and South Brisbane. However, the decision by this government to scrap those affordable homes takes away that hope from our young people and for so many in our community who simply need a roof over their head. I ask the government to stand up for people who need a home and for those young people caught in the ever-escalating rental market, commit to building affordable homes in South Brisbane and across Queensland, and give our families and young people back that hope.