

Question on Notice

Number. 595

Asked on Tuesday, 10 May 2005

Ms Stuckey MP asked the Minister for Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (Mr Pitt) -

With reference to the Beattie Government which came to power in June 1998 and as Queensland has seen a population increase of more than 452,000 people – almost the size of Gold Coast City and taking population increases and inflation into account – What is the real increase in funding for homeless youth since June 1998?

ANSWER:

The Department of Communities provides funding to services for homeless young people under Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) which is a joint Commonwealth/State funding program that provides crisis accommodation and support to homeless people.

Funding provided by the department under SAAP increased by 54% from \$11,313,267 in 1998-99 to \$17,392,529 in 2004-2005 with the largest increase of 17% between 1998 and 2000.

The current SAAP Agreement expires on 30 June 2005.

The Commonwealth Government and all state and territory governments have agreed to negotiate a further five year Agreement to cover the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2010. To date, the Commonwealth offer to Queensland has been unsatisfactory and fails to address the very low proportion of Commonwealth SAAP funding received by Queensland.

Queensland has approximately 19% of Australia's total population and 25% of its homeless population, but receives only 16.6% of Commonwealth funding for SAAP.

If Commonwealth funding was allocated more equitably then Queensland would have received almost \$67M in extra funds during the current five year agreement.

Minister Pitt met with Senator the Honourable Kay Patterson on 11 March 2005 and advocated strongly for an increased funding commitment from the Commonwealth Government to the homeless people of Queensland.