

Question on Notice
No. 635
Asked on Thursday, 17 May 2018

MS C LUI ASKED MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND PUBLIC WORKS; MINISTER FOR DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY; MINISTER FOR SPORT (HON M DE BRENNI)

Will the Minister advise how the Queensland Government is advocating for social housing tenants in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities and whether the Minister is aware of any alternative approaches?

ANSWER

In the recent Federal Budget, the Turnbull Government has made it clear that there will be no more money for the first time in fifty years to support remote Indigenous housing in Queensland. The Prime Minister and Federal Minister for Indigenous Affairs have walked away from Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and efforts to Closing the Gap through housing construction.

The Commonwealth and State partnership that has supported housing construction is critical to addressing overcrowding in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Without Commonwealth funding, we can expect to see increases in overcrowding and homelessness rates, and impacts for Indigenous health, education, employment and community safety outcomes.

The Palaszczuk Government has repeatedly called on the Turnbull Government and the local federal Member of Parliament Warren Entsch to urgently commit to ongoing housing funding for remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

On 29 March 2018, the Honourable Anastacia Palaszczuk MP, Premier and Minister for Trade wrote to the Prime Minister to confirm Queensland would provide up to \$1.08 billion over ten years, and seeking a commitment from the Turnbull Government to continue to provide funding at current levels.

Further, I wrote to Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister on 12 June 2018 restating Queensland's willingness to settle an agreement urgently given the looming deadline, and the serious and devastating impacts that would result in the Turnbull Government withdrawing from its obligations to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to ensuring our social housing tenants continue to live in safe, secure and affordable housing. Through the *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027* the Palaszczuk Government has committed to developing an *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan*. The Action Plan is proposed to span initiatives across urban, regional and remote communities, with a focus on home ownership, jobs and training, as well as positioning housing as a foundation for improved wellbeing.

We will continue to lobby the Prime Minister, Minister Scullion and Warren Entsch to stand up for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and continue to provide support for remote Indigenous housing as the Commonwealth Government has for the past fifty years.