
MEDIA RELEASE

POSSIBLE STIMULUS PACKAGE CUT BACKS MUST NOT TARGET SOCIAL HOUSING

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Major Church Providers of social services in Australia today urged the Federal Government to ensure its stimulus funding continues to support vulnerable Australians, especially through its promised investment in social housing.

The group made the comments following calls for the stimulus to be cut as the Australian dollar strengthens and the Reserve Bank raised interest rates for the first time since the Global Financial Crisis emerged last year.

“As Anti Poverty Week concludes, we are very aware of the effects of poverty on Australian families. The reports of ‘green shoots’ do give hope, but they do not, in any way, lessen the need for the boost in social housing,” said Kasy Chambers, Executive Director of Anglicare Australia.

“Earlier this year, the Government cut back money committed to social housing to top up the education stimulus money. Further cut backs on social housing would deepen the disadvantage experienced by some of the country’s most vulnerable people,” said David Eldridge, Territorial Social Program Secretary at The Salvation Army.

“While we welcomed the historic injection of money committed in the stimulus package to social and community housing, it comes nowhere close to meeting the growing unmet need,” said Lin Hatfield Dodds, National Director of UnitingCare Australia.

“There is a serious shortage of affordable housing across Australia. Interest rates are now on the increase and property prices are rising in some parts of the country. These factors will inevitably lead to increased rents – a gloomy prospect for people on income support who are exposed to the private rental market,” said Frank Quinlan, Executive Director of Catholic Social Services Australia.

The group said it is imperative for the Government to retain and even strengthen rather than weaken its current commitment to social and community housing.

The major church provider networks deliver the majority of social services in Australia.

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