
10,000 new public housing dwellings welcome

The ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS) responded to today's announcement by the ACT Greens of an election commitment to build and buy 10,000 new public housing dwellings in ten years.

"ACTCOSS calls on all parties and candidates to commit to similarly transformative change of the ACT's housing system," said Dr Devin Bowles.

"Business as usual, with a reliance on the market to provide housing to all, has clearly failed. The waiting list for standard priority public housing applicants is five years, a figure that has remained far too high for many years," said Dr Bowles.

"Over recent years, affordable housing has become out of reach for an increasing number of Canberrans, including many young people starting their careers and in full-time work," said Dr Bowles.

"In many jurisdictions internationally, the government is a landlord of choice, rather than of last resort. This approach means that the benefits of public housing are widely shared," said Dr Bowles.

"Most Canberrans care about someone who could directly benefit from expanded public housing, whether that is a friend, a child, a parent, or themselves," said Dr Bowles.

"Twenty-five years ago, the ACT Government owned a much larger share of Canberra's total housing stock. This plan is a sensible return to that approach," said Dr Bowles.

"Many families and businesses know that investing in real estate makes good financial sense. The same should be true for government, especially when a lack of affordable housing jeopardises the ACT's economic growth," said Dr Bowles.

"Many community sector organisations report their workers leaving the ACT because they cannot afford the housing. A substantial expansion of public housing would alleviate this stress for the community sector and help businesses hire the people they need to grow," said Dr Bowles.

"An increase of 10,000 new public housing dwellings would not only fix Canberra's homelessness problem, it would provide housing to those who are employed but unable to afford secure accommodation," said Dr Bowles.

ACTCOSS advocates for social justice in the ACT and represents not-for-profit community organisations. Follow us @ACTCOSS on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

**For more information or comment, please contact
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