



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Housing Affordability

SPEECH

Monday, 2 May 2016

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Date Monday, 2 May 2016
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Questioner
Speaker Bandt, Adam, MP

Source House
Proof No
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Mr BANDT (Melbourne) (16:44): Victoria is facing a housing crisis and, right now, over 25,000 people are homeless and 32,000 people are on the waiting list for public housing. According to Anglicare, fewer than one per cent of the homes for rent are affordable for people on a low income, and people experiencing homelessness often face years waiting for public housing. Housing activists in my electorate have taken it into their own hands to push for action. The Homeless Persons' Union of Victoria and its supporters have, for over a month now, been occupying homes in Bendigo Street, Collingwood that are owned by the government after being acquired for the defeated East West toll road. Six homes on this street have been left empty for over a year, while 32,000 people wait for public housing. Instead of filling these homes, the roads minister said he wanted to send in the police to evict the protesters. The occupiers—to them, I say, 'Good on you.' The neighbours there say, 'Good on you,' as well.

These people are leading the way in putting the government under pressure for action on housing. The Victorian budget last week was a test for Labor on housing, and they failed. The federal budget here will be a test for the coalition, and they will fail too. Governments have managed to find billions for toll roads, yet they have done nothing to respond to the massive need for new public housing in Victoria, and indeed, the federal government wants to make housing even more expensive. It is well past time for serious investment in public housing, for an end to negative gearing on new properties and capital gains tax that push housing out of the reach for too many. I congratulate the Homeless Persons' Union for their drawing attention to this issue. *(Time expired)*