



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

BILLS

Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2012-2013

Consideration in Detail

SPEECH

Tuesday, 19 June 2012

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Tuesday, 19 June 2012
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Questioner
Speaker O'Connor, Brendan, MP

Source House
Proof No
Responder
Question No.

Mr BRENDAN O'CONNOR (Gorton—Minister for Housing, Minister for Homelessness and Minister for Small Business) (19:47): In relation to those three questions I will have to provide the answers in detail, and I am happy to do so in writing. In relation to the first matter, I am not aware of the \$159.4 million provided to the Victorian Labor government for public housing. I will say this though: this government has a very proud record of dedicating resources to public housing and dedicating investments not only to public housing but to social housing.

In relation to those other two questions asked, again, I am very happy to examine the questions and come back to the shadow minister in relation to the answers. I will say this though, because it requires me to say this: I think it is entirely improper for the shadow minister to impute that decisions of ministers would be based on the grounds that he suggests. I can assure the shadow minister, the member for Menzies, that the ministers of this government who have made decisions in relation to public housing have done so upon the advice of the department and also with engagement with all other jurisdictions.

The one thing that is clear, if you want to compare the efforts of this government with the Howard government's history of dedicating investment in public housing, we have done a very good job and we have invested far more revenue to provide support for our most vulnerable. We want to have a partnership with state governments. Quite frankly, I do not care whether they are Liberal or Labor governments; I want to provide the benefits to those people who need such housing. I will work with every state minister in my portfolio to ensure that those tenants in public housing are provided every opportunity to be given sustainable accommodation, and indeed that those people on waiting lists for public housing are provided more opportunities. We have done that through an unprecedented investment of \$20 billion in relation to housing generally. We have actually provided \$5 billion in social housing. We have provided \$5 billion for services to protect the interests of those that are homeless or at risk of being homeless. We have a good record. I would suggest that the shadow minister's assertions are not correct, but I am very happy in relation to provide some of the detail and timing insofar as the allocation of resources to those states involved within the questions he asked. I am very happy to have that information provided to the member for Menzies.