Mr BILLSON (Dunkley) (11:31): On behalf of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme I present the committee's report entitled *Accommodation for people with disabilities and the NDIS*, together with the evidence received by the committee.

Report made a parliamentary paper in accordance with standing order 39(e).

Mr Husic interjecting—

Mr BILLSON: by leave—I would like to thank my friend and colleague Mr Husic for his encouragement! In tabling this report I recognise the bipartisan—the omniparliamentary—support for the NDIS. And what a great achievement it will be when it is fully rolled out. I extend the committee's congratulations to all who were involved in that important mission for our generation.

Enabling people with disability to have choice and control over their lives is one of the central tenets of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. At present, Australians with disability are not assured of access to housing that is suitable for their needs. This has been an issue at a local, state and national level for some time and amongst so many of us in this parliament. And, as was noted in the committee’s 2015 report, the lack of adequate housing can significantly limit people's ability to fully exercise choice and control. Ultimately, it restricts their ability to participate in society and live an ordinary life.

Hence, as part of the committee's review of the implementation, administration, and expenditure of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the committee decided to examine the issue of affordable and appropriate accommodation for people with disabilities. The committee noted in its most recent annual report, in July 2015, that the lack of adequate accommodation can limit people's ability to fully exercise their individual choice and control over their lives. It can also limit a person's ability to fully participate in society and to live a life with ambitions that we all share as Australian citizens.

On 23 October 2015 the committee concluded a round table hearing here in Canberra on housing. This was the first part of the committee's inquiry into accommodation for people with disabilities. The committee received 56 submissions to the inquiry. I would like to thank all of those who took the time not only to present their ideas to the committee but to engage in the discussions the committee instigated.

The committee has put forward four core recommendations to government to assist in addressing these important issues. I will not dwell on them for too long, other than to say that this is something that needs to be addressed, and the national disability peak organisations throughout our country as well as the state, territory and Commonwealth governments should liaise and work closely with the Australian Building Codes Board to examine updating the Building Code of Australia regarding to accessibility.

Another recommendation was to encourage the idea that accommodation for people with disability be integral to the development of affordable and social housing policy proposals more generally. A third recommendation was to urge the Commonwealth to explore all possible proposals for disability accommodation and ways in which the Commonwealth can assist in bringing them to fruition. Recommendation 4 was about the Commonwealth assessing how financially accessible housing is for people with a disability and their families as part of that examination of bringing different disability accommodation proposals to fruition.

Recommendation 5 supports the idea of the Department of Social Services clarifying the status of the Supported Accommodation Innovation Fund, and, if the fund is no longer available, whether other initiatives will either complement or replace it over time. The final recommendation urges the Commonwealth to explore capital sharing, securitisation and joint ownership options to expand the provision of appropriate accommodation for people with disabilities.
In the moments that are available to me, I would like to thank the committee for its work over the journey. We have been extraordinarily well served, as so many of us in this chamber know, by our committee staff: the secretary, Mark Fitt; the principal research officer, Gerry McInally, who has been confused as being my brother; senior research officer, Fiona Gardner; senior research officer, Natasha Rusjakovski; and also administrative officer, Hannah Dunn. I commend this report to the parliament. I urge all members to acquaint themselves with the recommendations and findings.

In a moment of pure indulgence, may I acknowledge and thank my bodacious wife, Kate, and my delightful children, who are in the chamber. My valedictory was impromptu and not able to be shared by my family.

Mr Husic interjecting—

Mr BILLSON: My friend Mr Husic has pointed out that, yes, I am indeed batting well above my average, and I thank him for pointing that out. I thank my sweetheart wife and my children for their unstinting support in public life. I love them; I admire them. I am eternally grateful and I will be home soon.