

21 April 2024

Everybody's Home
info@everybodyshome.com.au
2 Stanley Street
Collingwood
Victoria 3066

Dear Commissioners Cameron and Gurrin

Re: Submission to the People's Commission into the Housing Crisis

National Shelter is pleased to provide this submission for consideration by the Commissioners.

National Shelter is a non-government, registered charitable peak organisation that aims to improve housing access, affordability, appropriateness, safety and security for people on low incomes. Since 1975, National Shelter has been a trusted voice working towards influencing government policy and action, and by raising community awareness about housing issues, and illuminating the experience of low-income households within Australia's housing system.

Instead of providing a specific submission to the People's Commission please find links below submissions made by National Shelter to a range of inquiries and opportunities, including:

- [2024-2025 Pre-budget Submission](#)
- [CHIA-National-Shelter-NHHP-Submission-20102023](#) (with CHIA)
- [Submission to Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs on the Worsening Rental Crisis](#)
- [Submission to Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs: The Extent and Nature of Poverty in Australia](#)
- [Submission to the Senate Select Committee on the Cost of Living](#) (with CHIA and Homelessness Australia)
- [Submission to the Queensland Parliament on the Planning \(Inclusionary Zoning Strategy\) Amendment Bill 2023](#)
- [Letter to relevant Ministers on the disposal of surplus Defence estate](#)
- [Submission to Department of Social Services for A stronger, more diverse and independent community sector](#)

We also draw the Commissioners attention to the [Rental Affordability Index \(RAI\)](#) that is produced annually by National Shelter and SGS Economics and Planning. The RAI was established in 2015 to fill a gap tracking rental affordability over time across Australia. Since its establishment the RAI has become a crucial tool for policymakers and authoritative voice on rental affordability in Australia. For a decade it has tracked rental affordability trends and informs evidence-based policy decisions – highlighting nuances between places and the experiences of disadvantaged households. The RAI is a respected indicator of rental affordability and is utilised by the Australian [Urban Research Infrastructure Network \(AURIN\)](#) and the [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare \(AIHW\) housing dashboard](#).

We also draw to the Commissioners attention the [Joint statement on the worsening rental crisis Australia](#) developed by National Shelter and the National Association of Renters' Organisations (NARO) and endorsed by 80 organisations. We also draw to the

Commissioners attention the [National-nine-principles-for-strengthening-renters-rights](#) developed by NARO to inform National Cabinet.

Broadly our recommendations from the submissions are:

Funding of social and affordable housing

- That the Australian government commit and fund to delivering social and affordable housing to meet the target of social and affordable housing comprising 10% of total housing stock, utilising the National Housing and Homelessness Plan and National Housing and Homelessness Agreement setting targets and actions for jurisdictions.
- At least double the Housing Australia Future Fund from \$10billion to \$20billion to provide a further pipeline of social and affordable housing.
- That the Australian government lead the development of a national policy framework for the development and delivery of inclusionary zoning to increase the supply of social and affordable housing, including prioritizing inclusionary zoning in the National Housing Accord.

Resource the sector appropriately

- That a renewed National Housing and Homelessness Agreement adequately resources the sector to meet the real costs of operation and service delivery including wages, appropriate indexation, and other essential rising costs. This includes increasing funding to homelessness services by \$450million per annum so it can meet current and future demand.
- Returning funding to housing and homelessness peak bodies, including National Shelter, to be able to meaningful engage with government to represent the interests of the sector, members, and constituents, as well as contribute to ongoing policy development and engagement.

Ensure that income support and other demand measures are adequate

- That the Australian government, through the National Housing Supply and Affordability Council or the Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee, undertake an inquiry to examine reform of CRA to optimise value and impact for low-income rental households.
- And in the meantime, the Australian Government increase the maximum rate of CRA by at least 50%, and that this amount be indexed to the rental component of CPI from 2024 onward.
- That eligibility for CRA be extended to all people who meet income tests requirements, irrespective of their source of income.
- The Australian Government permanently increase JobSeeker, Youth Allowance, Austudy, Abstudy, Special Benefit and Parenting Payments to at least \$78 per day.

Make renting more affordable and fairer

- That the Australian government continue to lead the development of a new national agenda for tenancy law reform with state and territory governments that provides better protections for tenants for security of tenure, minimum standards, and rent increases. This includes the adoption of the NARO 'national nine' as a framework and includes the Community Sector Blueprint.
- That National Cabinet commit to a clear process and timing on the implementation of the rental reform agenda. This could include utilising the National Housing and Homelessness Plan and National Housing and Homelessness Agreement as the vehicle and reporting mechanisms on progress.

- The Australian Government's leadership on housing include an explicit focus on the tenancy rights of people with disability that are currently being ignored or sidelined, and that it pushes for reforms that protect these rights across all jurisdictions.

Reform housing taxation to making housing equitable

- Undertaking a large scale review of taxation in Australia, with a view to reducing inefficiencies and inequity in the housing market, and the creation of an intentionally designed housing system.
- This includes:
 - Reducing the CGT discount for individuals and trust to 25%
 - Limiting negative gearing and quarantine passive investment losses so they can only be written off against other investment income
 - Removing negative gearing and CGT discount on properties that are used for short term rental
 - Redirecting of revenue savings towards social and affordable housing.

We would welcome the opportunity to expand on our recommendations, or further discuss our proposals in this area. Please do not hesitate to be in touch if you would like to discuss the issues raised in greater detail.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Greenhalgh', enclosed in a light grey rectangular box.

Emma Greenhalgh
CEO National Shelter