



Media release

## 25,000 children among the tens of thousands waiting for social housing in Victoria

Tuesday 5 June:

Victoria's peak body for homelessness is dismayed to learn that tens of thousands of children are living in limbo on social housing waiting lists while plans for new social housing dwellings are being roadblocked in Parliament.

A parliamentary committee [report](#) into the Victorian Government's Public Housing Renewal Program released today has revealed for the first time that 82,499 Victorians are waiting for social housing, among which are 24,622 children. The report also reveals that the number of people on the Victorian Housing Register increased by 1,500 people in the first three months of 2018 alone.

Previous figures have only reported the number of applications, which sits at 36,700 state wide.

"Behind the numbers are children who are waiting for a home, and families with their lives on hold. A permanent, affordable home is a foundation for engaging in education, getting a job, having a stable life, and currently 82,000 Victorians are being denied that stability," said Jenny Smith, CEO, Council to Homeless Persons.

CHP says the new figures should be a wake-up call to those who are opposing the re-development of nine public housing sites around Melbourne under the \$185 million Public Housing Renewal Program. The Program would deliver 1,778 new public homes across nine sites under the private-public mix, versus just 617 new homes if the land was kept solely for public housing. The program will also overhaul thousands of dilapidated public housing dwellings.

The Committee's report comes just two weeks after a Rental Affordability Index showed that single parents in Melbourne on a low income is forced to spend nearly 60 per cent of their income on rent.

"Skyrocketing rents are driving thousands more people to homelessness services, but our services can't house people without more social housing and we're turning away 92 people every day," said Ms Smith.

CHP has been calling for progress on the Public Housing Renewal Program for some time, supporting the salt-and-pepper mix of private and public housing,

"Developing private housing alongside the social and affordable housing means more social housing can be produced for the money available, and it creates healthy, productive neighbourhoods with a mix of income-earners living side-by-side," said Ms Smith.

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