



Indigenous housing in crisis, election forum will hear

An election forum on Indigenous housing will [today](#) hear that at least 8,500 new codesigned, culturally appropriate, climate resilient properties are needed in the next four years to address severe overcrowding and disadvantage.

The call comes in an election priorities paper jointly released by *Change the Record* and *Everybody's Home*, ahead of a noon [forum involving candidates](#) running in the North Queensland seat of Leichhardt.

First Nations Housing - Election Priorities also calls for further funding to the states and territories to ensure existing public housing stock is retrofitted and properly maintained as the climate crisis worsens.

The paper recommends sustained, long-term commitments to increasing and properly resourcing Aboriginal Community-Controlled housing, to meet the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

It comes after the recent Commonwealth Budget continued a decade of cuts to social housing and homelessness services, cancelling all dedicated funding for remote Indigenous housing after the 2022-23 financial year. The \$223.80 million allocated to the Northern Territory for remote housing as part of an existing bilateral agreement falls well short of the \$2 billion the Central Land Council estimated would be required to meet community need earlier this year.

Cheryl Axleby, chair of Change the Record, said remote Indigenous housing had been abandoned by the Federal Government.

“The lack of federal support for First Nations housing in the bush, in towns and in our cities is appalling. We saw the very real health consequences of the overcrowding crisis on our people during Covid-19 and yet the Federal Government has failed to do anything about it.

For years, successive governments have neglected First Nations’ housing - aggravating poverty and chronic disease and preventing First Nations people from achieving social and economic justice. Right across the continent, communities are deprived of the powerful economic ripple effect of housing investment. If we can dole out subsidies to first home buyers, why can’t we adequately support housing for First Nations people?”

Kate Colvin, national spokesperson for Everybody’s Home concurred.

“The lack of new investment in remote Indigenous housing is a national scandal. The overcrowding

crisis facing First Nations Peoples is not an accident, it is the direct consequence of Government policy. With renewed investment we can make a profound improvement and give more First Nations Australians the secure, safe housing we all deserve.”

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