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SOCIAL HOUSING MUST BE VIEWED AS ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

A new report examining the economic benefits of appropriately located and affordable housing echoes Labor's calls for governments to prioritise housing investment as an economic and social imperative.

The UNSW Sydney and Community Housing Industry Association NSW's [*Strengthening Economic Cases for Housing*](#) mirrors Labor's position that housing be considered essential infrastructure akin to roads and public transport.

The report modelled the economic impact of a housing program half the size of Labor's proposed policy of building [250,000 new affordable homes](#) and found significant social and economic benefits.

The report found a range of benefits including that:

- a worker could save \$2,500 per year in travel time through shorter commute times, leading to an extra \$1.13 billion of labour supply in the NSW economy
- by moving workers closer to a wider range of jobs that better suit their skillset, incomes increased by between \$12,000 to \$41,000 a year

- these increased earnings would provide \$17.57 billion boost to the economy over 40 years
- that investing in 125,000 affordable rented homes over 10 years would provide a net boost to the economy of \$12 billion

The Australian housing market is failing under the Liberals hands-off approach with increasing numbers of people, particularly women and children, not having access to safe and affordable housing.

While the Liberals want to maintain the world's most generous tax concessions for wealthy investors, housing experts all agree that additional investment is critical to expanding social and affordable housing stock.

If elected, Labor will build [250,000 new affordable homes](#) to address the estimated [520,000 shortfall of affordable rental properties](#) across Australia.

Labor's scheme will drive residential construction and establish a secure long-term pipeline of investment on the scale required to address the massive shortfall.

This will build the capacity of the community housing sector, boost employment and address the profound shortage of affordable housing in Australia.

Strengthening Economic Cases for Housing comes on top of a recent [Productivity Commission Report](#) showing the number of low-income households in rental stress has now reached a staggering 599,049.

The Coalition's obsession with privatisation, competition policy and their faith in the invisible hand of the market has resulted in an incoherent, incompetent and failed approach to housing policy in Australia.

Only Labor has the policies and commitment to assist hundreds of thousands of

our fellow Australians to put a roof over their head, live in increased security with better health, education and productivity outcomes for the nation.

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Authorised by Noah Carroll, ALP, Canberra.