

MEDIA RELEASE

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Labor secures clear mandate on housing – now's the time for action

Urban Taskforce Australia CEO, Tom Forrest, today congratulated Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and the Labor team for their comprehensive election win over the weekend.

Having a strong majority government is a blessing for Australian democracy. The Coalition's abject performance on both policy development and campaigning has delivered Labor a solid mandate. The public repudiation of the Greens was also a salient lesson to those that seek to hold up legislation that supports housing supply.

As the post-election cliché goes, the election is now over and it's back to work for the Albanese government.

Housing affordability and housing supply featured large during the campaign. The key now is for the Government to strike while the iron's hot. If legislation is needed to support the delivery of Labor's \$10 billion, 100,000 new homes commitment – then pass it through the parliament now and get on with it.

The Housing Accord targets remain and the nation continues to be a long way behind.

Urban Taskforce members support the following 5-point plan for Housing:

1. **Fast track the funding and delivery of all the infrastructure** projects which were promised across the nation. The Commonwealth must support the delivery of infrastructure that links existing infrastructure assets with growth opportunities for housing supply. That's what the Albanese Government promised – so now's the time to deliver.
2. **Roll out the third round of the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF)** as soon as possible. Round 1 was strongly backed by Community Housing Providers and the private sector builders who deliver new housing. The Coalition promised to abolish the HAFF – but this was clearly rejected and Housing Australia must move quickly now to finalise contracts and deliver housing.
3. Shift the focus beyond social and affordable housing and **support the sector that delivers 95% of housing for Australians – the private sector**. Our industry is keen to work with the Albanese Government to deliver housing to solve the crisis – but we need to work together to drive productivity forward and reduce costs across the board.
4. Any housing related **payments to the states must be based on improvements** in their planning systems and reduced fees, taxes and charges. Both the states and the Commonwealth have a massive role to play in driving productivity in the housing space and the Commonwealth needs to

The comments and analysis above can be attributed to **Tom Forrest**, CEO, Urban Taskforce.

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encourage the states to drive cost reductions and reward them accordingly. Supporting off-site prefabricated housing is key to improving costs and productivity and this is an area where we have fallen a long way behind. National Competition Policy payments were granted in conjunction with reforms being achieved to successfully drive productivity improvements in the 1990s. That system of rewards for change should be adopted now.

5. **Housing Australia should see its role expanded and be central to the government's commitment to deliver 100,000 new houses.** Housing Australia should become a key "off the plan purchaser" of new housing supply, then use the \$10 billion commitment to allocate, sell or rent those houses to key workers, for use as affordable housing through Community Housing Providers or for social housing, at whatever discount the government chooses or is prepared to fund. This would be an important under-write for new housing supply as well as ensuring that affordable housing is made available to those that need it.

A lot of work has been done by the states to improve planning processes and increase the number of approvals. The key now is for the Commonwealth to assist in bridging the feasibility gap by driving down fees, taxes and charges while supporting improved productivity, as well as funding housing related infrastructure.

The Albanese government has a clear mandate and should progress with legislation with alacrity where this is needed, and if not – full steam ahead from today.

End.

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