



Date: 21 August 2023

Senate Standing Committees on Economics
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir / Madam

Inquiry into Housing Australia Future Fund 2023 [No. 2] [Provisions], National Housing Supply and Affordability Council Bill 2023 [No. 2] [Provisions] and the Treasury law Amendment (Housing Measures No. 1) Bill 2023 [No. 2] [Provisions]

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Senate Inquiry.

Our submission with respect to the original bills continues to be relevant. However, the recent publication of an [Issues Paper](#) to inform the development of the National Housing and Homelessness Plan (NHHP) has led us to make this very short supplementary input. We want to emphasise that the legislation to establish Housing Australia must not compromise its potential to evolve into the strong national housing agency Australia needs.

In our submission to the NHHP consultation we will set out in detail our proposals for what the Plan should consider and the institutions needed to ensure its success. Of relevance to this present submission is that the Issues Paper lacks analysis of the housing system's performance, and instead simply sets out a siloed list of issues with no consideration of how these interact with other parts of the system. Nor does it highlight the housing relevance of other government decisions - for example, on migration, welfare benefits policy and major infrastructure investments. While the Department of Social Services has many strengths, it lacks the whole of housing system expertise and domain knowledge to co-ordinate and develop a fit for purpose housing strategy.

For that we need Housing Australia, which has the capacity to become a body that could co-ordinate housing and housing related policy across different jurisdictions and agencies / departments. While we accept this role may take time to fully establish, it is vital that Housing Australia is (1) not weakened by being deprived of the research function it held as NHFIC and (2) not prevented from assuming a significant future role, including the lead responsibility for the NHHP and support to the National Housing Supply and Affordability Council. In respect of the latter, this requires an adjustment to Division 3, section 31 that would enable the Council's secretariat or other supporting

functions to be carried out by Housing Australia. This would be facilitated by removing the restriction that the 'staff assisting' the Council be 'APS employees in the Department.

In addition, we also want to reinforce the importance of the NHHP being legislated. We appreciate that this may not be possible to include in the current legislation. However, as we suggested in our previous submission, this does not preclude an additional function under section 9 of the National Housing Supply and Affordability Council bill to 'advise the Minister on the development, implementation and delivery of a National Housing and Homelessness Plan or Strategy'.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to make this submission.

Yours sincerely,



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