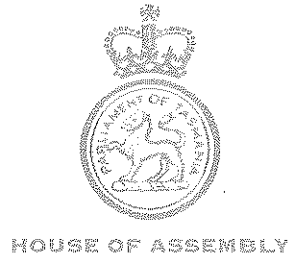


**JEREMY ROCKLIFF MP**  
Liberal Member for Braddon



47B Best Street  
Devonport Tas 7310  
Ph: (03) 6421 7930  
Fax: (03) 6423 5819  
[jeremy.rockliff@parliament.tas.gov.au](mailto:jeremy.rockliff@parliament.tas.gov.au)

31 March 2008

Committee Secretary  
Senate Select Committee on Housing Affordability in Australia  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir or Madam

Please find attached the Tasmanian Liberals' submission to the Select Committee on Housing Affordability in Australia.

If you require additional information, please contact my office for assistance.

I look forward to the release of the final report in June 2008.

Yours sincerely



**Jeremy Rockliff, MP**  
Liberal Member for Braddon

## **Submission by the Tasmanian Liberals to the Senate Select Committee on Housing Affordability in Australia**

It is crucial to the economic and social prosperity of the State that we work together to respond to the growing demand for more affordable homes.

The Tasmanian Liberals welcome the opportunity to provide this submission and we are prepared to take the lead in debate to address affordable housing supply and develop a range of innovative solutions that will deliver affordable rental, provide new opportunities for home ownership and relieve stress on families.

### **The Tasmanian Liberals' submission for Affordable Housing:**

The Tasmanian Liberals believe an Affordable Housing Strategy is paramount to developing new strategies for improving housing affordability in the State.

The Strategy should focus on enabling the provision of more affordable housing in Tasmania, and reducing the number of Tasmanians experiencing housing stress. A plan is needed to make affordable housing available to more Tasmanians, provide quality housing for those in need in our community and reinvigorate neighbourhoods.

#### ***Affordable Housing Act***

We recommend the implementation of a new Affordable Housing Act, as has been enacted in South Australia, to give Councils the ability to make planning provisions for affordable housing developments, provide for a more integrated housing governance structure and ensure greater flexibility to work in partnership with the private and community housing sector to deliver more affordable housing outcomes.

#### ***Private partnerships***

Rather than mandate the inclusion of a certain portion of affordable housing in new developments, the Tasmanian Liberals believe that incentives should be provided to private developers to encourage the development of affordable housing.

#### ***Private rental assistance***

The Tasmanian Liberals welcome the Australian Government's commitment to establishing a new National Rental Affordability Scheme. We will work with the Australian Government and private sector to develop local initiatives for application under the scheme.

### ***Local Government Housing Resource Kit***

We will examine the production of a Local Government Housing Resource Kit in conjunction with the Resource Planning and Development Commission and the Local Government Association.

This Kit would assist Tasmanian councils to identify critical housing issues in their community and develop effective local responses that are supported by regional and statewide planning and investment. The Kit will provide a checklist of affordable housing strategies for councils to consider when considering development proposals.

### ***Audit of surplus Government land***

Under the Affordable Housing Strategy, the Tasmanian Liberals will create a powerful new body to conduct an audit of surplus government land that could be available for release for housing development, accelerate the release of surplus land, and take over responsibility for development approvals on all land under its control, to reduce red tape and delays.

We would require, each year, every government department to come back to the minister for housing and report the surplus land that they have and to show cause why it should not be released for housing development and wider community infrastructure development. Release of surplus government land should be driven by the social good, not an economic imperative.

### ***Planning issues***

The Tasmanian Liberals are also aware of the myriad of planning issues that are involved here, namely that Tasmania's large number of diverse planning schemes continues to be a source of frustration for many builders.

We are committed to making it easier for people to build on their land as of right by conducting a complete review of land use planning/zoning requirements, (including role of the Resource Planning and Development Commission).

### ***Concerns re the Commonwealth's capacity to deliver***

The Tasmanian State Opposition is concerned by the current resourcing of the Commonwealth bureaucracy charged with delivering reform in Housing Affordability – the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).

It is also being asked to continue vital programs in family and community services policy and the Northern Territory intervention. Given the Rudd Government's recent razor gang activities and perceived need for a productivity dividend, does FaHCSIA have the capacity to develop the programs it is being asked to deliver?

### ***Concerns re skills***

To work to address the labour shortage in the residential construction industry, the Tasmanian Liberals believe in the implementation of measures to encourage more skilled migrants to come to Tasmania to live and work. For example, to attract and retain skilled migrants to the State, we are committed to examining the establishment of partnerships between government and employers, whereby skilled migrants are guaranteed employment with an employer for a certain period of time. Tasmania must realize that it is competing with other States to attract skilled migrants and

should be prepared to offer flexible employment packages which may include recognition of their prior learning, should they wish to study.

### ***Conclusion***

Whilst policy in this area is under active review, the Tasmanian Liberals remain committed to:

- undertaking a comprehensive review of Tasmania's structural taxation and duties arrangements, including the land tax regime, which is a disincentive to investment and property development in the State and an indirect tax on rental householders;
- establishing a "Homeshare" program in Tasmania to benefit older Tasmanians wishing to remain living independently, and students requiring accommodation;
- encouraging the use of superannuation funds to promote affordable housing development;
- increasing the provision of emergency accommodation for families and individuals with accompanying children, with recurrent funding provided to non-government sectors to manage the provision of this accommodation; and
- innovative youth homelessness models, such as the Foyer model, which provides housing for young people in a community environment in which individuals can support one another and achieve independence whilst receiving assistance in finding appropriate employment, training or education and moving into longer-term and secure affordable housing options.

31 March 2008