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**Media Release: Local homelessness services call for urgent housing stimulus package as homelessness continues to increase**

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Local homelessness service, [enter organisation name] are warning their members of parliament of the pressure growing in communities as a result of COVID-19, urging them to act.

[Name] [title] said homelessness services continue to support those must vulnerable and but too often their clients are held back by the lack of available and affordable housing.

XXX service has XX amount of people working with them to exit homelessness. And the amount of people coming to them for help has grown by XXX

Across NSW, due to migration of people from Sydney as a consequence of the pandemic, almost all regional areas have seen rental vacancy rates plummet, while rents skyrocket, with no sign of conditions easing.

“We are on the frontline day in and out, and providing to support to individuals and families who are for the first time ever at risk of homelessness due to low incomes and an unaffordable rental market”

“In our community there is often up to XXX people/families viewing properties and with a vacancy rate of XXX there simply isn’t enough affordable housing out there.

“Inaction on social housing has meant that the waitlist is between 5-10 years and so it is simply not an option”

“We need our local members to not just understand the need out here, when people are on the brink, but to actually take steps to address it, and urgently.”

[Economic modelling](https://www.ncoss.org.au/policy-advocacy/policy-research-publications/supporting-economic-recovery-in-nsw-investment-in-social-and-affordable-housing-is-critical-to-supporting-jobs-today-and-families-into-the-future/) has demonstrated that a stimulus package with a focus on acquiring social housing now while rolling out a strategy to build more social housing is a ‘Win-Win’ for the NSW government. It details both the stimulus to the residential construction sector and household wealth, as well as long term benefits due to improved housing security, health and economic participation.

“To meet the level of need, we’re asking our members of parliament to fight for acquisition of existing housing stock to convert into social housing, to meet need now and commit to building an additional 5,000 units of social and affordable housing per year, for the next 10 years.

The investment would cost $1.88 billion in 2020-21 – a small proportion of the actual and estimated windfall in NSW government coffers from the private housing boom – and support 18,000 construction jobs across NSW.

Media contact: [Name], {organisation] [title] [mobile/contact]