



Andrew Wilkie MP
INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR DENISON

20 AUG 2013

The Hon Julie Collins MP
Minister for Housing and Homelessness
PO Box 38
ROSNY PARK TAS 7018

Dear Minister *Julie,*

It is my understanding that the Federal Government has waived South Australia's housing debt of \$320 million. I ask that the same be done for Tasmania's current housing debt which is approximately \$209 million.

Housing Tasmania receives \$32 million each year from the Federal Government as part of the National Affordable Housing Agreement. Of that, \$16.8 million is immediately returned as debt repayment leaving Housing Tasmania with only half of its allocated funds to spend on affordable housing.

The funding shortfall presents two immediate problems. First, the current waiting list for public housing stands at over 3,000 resulting in many vulnerable and disadvantaged Tasmanians being forced into homelessness. Second, flagship Federal Government initiatives such as DisabilityCare and Partners in Recovery cannot be delivered effectively because they assume all clients have access to long-term affordable housing. Cancellation of Tasmania's housing debt would go a long way to end this baffling incongruity.

I call upon the Federal Government to waive Tasmania's housing debt. This would be an essential step towards supporting existing Government initiatives and will go a long way towards improving the availability of affordable housing to all Tasmanians. Moreover the precedent has just been set in South Australia.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Wilkie MP
Independent Member for Denison
cc The Hon Cassy O'Connor MP