

Inquiry into Homelessness in Victoria

Mr Benjamin Cronshaw

Organisation Name:

Your position or role:

SURVEY QUESTIONS

Drag the statements below to reorder them. In order of priority, please rank the themes you believe are most important for this inquiry into homelessness to consider::

Services,Public housing,Housing affordability,Family violence,Mental health,Employment,Rough sleeping,Indigenous people

What best describes your interest in our Inquiry? (select all that apply) :

Concerned citizen

Are there any additional themes we should consider?

YOUR SUBMISSION

Submission:

Homelessness is a serious issue affecting our community. I commend the Victorian Parliament for opening this inquiry and examining ways to address homelessness. In such a prosperous country such as Australia, homelessness should never be acceptable. We should ensure that all people have a dignified standard of living, including access to secure housing. I believe we could capably afford to do this, there just needs to be the will to do so.

It may be tempting to think of homeless people as the 'other,' thinking that it could never happen to me. But really, homelessness can affect anyone. Even people with stable employment and secure housing could be struck suddenly by misfortune. This could include job loss, rental dispute, relationship breakdown, health problems, or even natural disasters (such as the 2019/2020 bushfire crisis). Homelessness can take many forms, including rough sleeping, staying with friends or family, or living in boarding houses or caravan parks.

There needs to be a holistic public policy to prevent and address homelessness. Housing affordability is critical. The cost of housing in Australia has been steadily rising, while the real wages have been struggling to keep up. People on low, fixed incomes are particularly vulnerable. To counter these pressures, the government should support programs that provide affordable accommodation. This could include rental assistance and low-cost, public housing. This should include housing in rural and indigenous areas. Servants Community Housing in Hawthorn is a great example of a service providing housing to people at risk of homelessness. These houses provide a supportive community environment, enabling the residents to transition towards employment and secure, independent living.

Domestic violence is another driver of homelessness. An unstable or violent situation at home can force people, even from a well-off background, out of home. There should be greater support for secure and safe crisis accommodation. They should not have to face a dilemma of enduring abuse at home or living on the streets. People fleeing violence are vulnerable to further abuse if they are forced to sleep rough. Addressing domestic violence and family breakdowns would be significant towards preventing homelessness.

Addressing homelessness also makes good economic sense. Helping people get secure housing would

reduce the healthcare and policing costs arising from homelessness, and enable to contribute more fully to the community. This is particularly true for family homelessness, where helping the parents would also lead to better future outcomes for the children. Given suitable accommodation and an opportunity for study or employment, people can rebuild their lives and pursue their dreams and aspirations. While sleeping rough can have a serious, negative impact on people's lives, it is not inevitable that people become or stay homeless.

Thank you considering my submission.

Kind Regards,

Benjamin Cronshaw.

Bibliography

Commonwealth of Australia, 2008, The Road Home: A National Approach to Reducing Homelessness

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?:

FILE ATTACHMENTS

File1:

File2:

File3:

Signature:

Benjamin Cronshaw