



MEDIA RELEASE

Stimulus funding for affordable housing must not be cut

Northern Rivers Social Development Council has joined calls to ensure that funding for social housing is not cut as part of any wind back of stimulus funding.

Stimulus funding for social housing has already been cut once and key community groups, including the Australian Council for Social Service, National Shelter and the ACTU, are concerned that further cuts to funding for social housing may be made in response to improving economic conditions.

NRSDC has joined their call to ensure that funding for social housing is protected from any stimulus withdrawal. Any reduction in stimulus spending in response to improving economic conditions must not be at the expense of urgently-needed affordable housing infrastructure.

Across Australia there is a shortage of 251,000 affordable dwellings and more than a million low income people are in housing stress.

According to NRSDC CEO, Tony Davies, funding for social and affordable housing is desperately needed on the NSW North Coast.

“We are pleased that the economy is in recovery, but the housing affordability crisis remains. There is an acute shortage of affordable accommodation across the region,” Mr Davies said.

“Rents in the Northern Rivers are the highest in the State outside of Sydney. Vacancy rates are extremely low and with many families living on low incomes they are all feeling the squeeze.”

“We have very low levels of public housing compared to the rest of the state meaning that we desperately need the new housing investment promised under the stimulus package.”

According to Mr Davies, investment in public and community housing will provide long term economic benefits to the community - regardless of whether it is considered stimulus spending.

“This investment will boost productivity over the longer term; establish a solid asset base to support vulnerable people; strengthen community wellbeing; and reduce future demand for expensive government-funded crisis services,” he said.

Media Contact Tony Davies CEO 0438 222 636