

2010 State Election



Australian Greens SA

239 Wright St, Adelaide SA 5000
campaign2010@sa.greens.org.au
08 8212 4888 (p) 08 8212 4822 (f)

www.sa.greens.org.au

Response to Homelessness SA's

"An open letter to candidates for the South Australian election 2010"

Increased provision of emergency accommodation and transitional housing for people in need including, but not limited to; women and children affected by family violence, people experiencing homelessness, refugees and asylum seekers, young people, families and people released from institutional and custodial facilities

The Greens believe that affordable housing is a human right that needs to be met through a mix of options. The Greens want adequate investment in public and community housing and an increase in the provision of emergency accommodation and transitional housing for people in need - including women and children affected by family and domestic violence, refugees and asylum seekers, youth at-risk and people released from detention. This emergency and transitional housing must be exactly this, and people in need or crisis must then be provided with sufficient exit opportunities into long-term, secure and appropriate accommodation.

Increased provision of long term housing options with security of tenure for people exiting emergency or transitional accommodation

The Greens have a strong commitment to ensuring viable exit options are available from emergency or transitional accommodation and equally accessible. As stated above, we want sufficient exit opportunities into long term housing provided for all users of emergency and transitional accommodation.

Increased provision of appropriate support for people experiencing homelessness, or at risk of homelessness, in emergency accommodation, transitional housing and long term accommodation, including for those that require assistance to maintain their tenancy

The Greens believe that governments need to provide sufficient public and community housing and to work towards the elimination of housing-related poverty. All Australians should have access to adequate, safe, secure, sustainable and affordable housing and those Australians unable to provide their own housing should be given increased

housing assistance by the Government. Where support, in addition to the bricks and mortar of a tenancy, is required, this too should form part of the Government's approach.

People experiencing homelessness, or at risk of homelessness, have priority access to required services such as mental health, alcohol and other drugs, financial counselling and emergency assistance.

The Greens propose targeted support to the needs of individuals and communities in conjunction with the strong support and development of an active not-for-profit sector. Support services to secure and maintain accommodation are vital to this.

Increase funding to allow pay parity for those working in the not for profit homelessness sector with similar positions in government.

The Greens strongly believe that all working people must receive fair and equitable remuneration for their work in addition to believing that the objects of profitability and efficiency should not override social objectives. It is not good enough that many working in the community sector are the working poor. The Greens will fight for adequate, longer-term and timely funding for not-for-profit welfare and advocacy organisations. We have supported the Strong Community Healthy State campaign since 2008 and will continue to highlight the plight of workers in this sector.

Reduce waiting times on public and community housing waiting lists

The Greens are committed to seeing minimal waiting times on public housing waiting lists and improving accessibility for all people experiencing homelessness to public and community housing. We welcome recent announcements for increased funding to address homelessness and the housing crisis in SA. To achieve this goal, housing stock must actually be increased, and not subject to fudged-figures and trumpeted increased builds or refurbishments, while other housing stock is sold off or unused.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to adequate, secure, well-maintained, safe and culturally appropriate long-term housing, wherever they live.

The Greens believe that the housing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must be met as a matter of urgency. The Greens propose funding for a 10 year

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing plan with a focus on appropriate housing and infrastructure to address unmet needs.

Commitment to implement improved homelessness legislation

The Greens recognise the strong need for improved homelessness legislation which tackles the underlying structural issues of homelessness, adequate housing and housing affordability. There is a strong connection between a lack of stable housing and inter-generational poverty and we support improving the legislation in this area to provide more equitable housing options for all South Australians. Of particular concern is the narrow focus on sleeping rough, which is often focussed upon by the Rann Labor Government in its approach to homelessness. While this is indeed one part of the need in our community we will seek to broaden the debate beyond simply those sleeping rough in our city streets and parks to include those in rural and regional SA, those living in cars in the suburbs or couch surfing, or the myriad of other homeless in our communities who are both less visible and less talked about.

Adequate funding is provided to ensure that the homelessness peak body is able to represent the views of both, people experiencing homelessness and the organisations working with them.

The Greens strongly support an active civil society, and believe that a vibrant not-for-profit sector that is able to provide direct, independent and fearless advice to Government on social services, is a valuable part of such a society. The Greens want adequate and secure funding for not-for-profit welfare and advocacy organisations that will bring real debate and challenges to Government. Dissent is nothing to be feared and can pave the way to a better future for all South Australians.