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MEDIA RELEASE

Budget housing package contains welcome news for NSW renters

The Government's announcement it will go ahead with new financing mechanisms that would facilitate institutional investment in social and affordable housing is good news for NSW families struggling with crippling rental stress, the NSW Federation of Housing Associations said today.

The Federation's head of policy and communications, Deborah Georgiou, said the government's housing package had shown new leadership by placing housing affordability on the agenda.

Ms Georgiou welcomed the Treasurer's commitment to maintain funding under a newly titled National Housing And Homelessness Agreement, with greater transparency and accountability for states around the number of homes they deliver under the agreement.

And she said the government had showing it was willing to consider a range of solutions to address the shortage of social and affordable rental housing.

"We will need to study the package in greater detail, but there are some very good announcements. Importantly they have also clearly articulated a set of measures, which will work together to deliver housing outcomes."

Ms Georgiou said unlocking access to institutional financing for community housing providers through the new National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation was an important step in establishing the sector as an important part of the Australian housing market – along side the private development sector and public housing.

Access to cheaper, long-term finance will allow community housing providers to refinance existing loans and expand their portfolios to provide more safe, secure, affordable homes for people who need them.

However she said there must also be co-financing from both commonwealth and state governments to make projects viable.

"Cheap financing on its own will not build social and affordable homes," Ms Georgiou said.

"As IPART outlined at it's hearing in Sydney today, we also need financial support at a state level, and planning reforms that will help generate the pipeline of housing needed to attract institutional capital at a scale required to really start fixing the problem.

"We are looking forward to the NSW Government showing its commitment to solving housing affordability for families with some big policy announcements as part of the NSW Budget on June 20."

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