

Speaking at the launch was ALP candidate for Hasluck Sharryn Jackson, Greens Senate candidate for WA Scott Ludlum and WA Liberal Party Senator Mathias Cormann.

Ms Jackson offered Opposition Leader Kevin Rudd's proposed national rental scheme -- which would include the establishment of 50,000 new affordable rental houses in WA -- as a solution.

"In Hasluck, 36.2 per cent of renters are in rental stress, which means at least 30 per cent of their income is going to rent," she said.

Mr Ludlum supported the objectives of the campaign that included the need for a national housing minister, a national housing strategy and more public housing.

He cited building sustainable, renewable communities as a solution to the affordability crisis, rather than creating urban sprawl.

Mr Cormann said the crisis came down to supply and demand, with a lack of supply driving up property values, which had a flow-on effect on the rental market.

Cutting red tape to allow more land to be released and cutting land tax would have an immediate impact on affordability, he said.

<http://www.news.com.au/perthnow/story/0,21598,22595618-5013244,00.html>

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

Over 230,000 households are on the waiting list for public housing and 100,000 are homeless. (CES)

A house now costs seven times an average annual income. Ten years ago it was only four times. (CES)

The proportion of Australians who have paid off their mortgage dropped from 41% to 33% from 1996 to 2006. (CES)

In 2004-05 SAAP provided services to 157,200 people, including 56,800 children. (AIHW)

In 2006-07 Perth housing prices increased 15%. (ABS)

Commonwealth Rent Assistance, received by 85,122 households in 2005, has increased 8.1% in three years whilst median rents in Perth have risen 33.3% in the same time. (TAS)

In the last round of funding there was a zero increase in absolute terms to the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP), the main Federal program to fund crisis accommodation for homeless and marginal folks. In real terms this amounts to a decrease.

The private rental market is largely unregulated. Tax subsidies favour investment owners rather than renters or owner-occupiers.

State & Federal funding for public housing has declined. In 1995-96 public housing accounted for 6% of housing stock in WA but by 2004-05 this had fallen to 4.2%. (TAS)

Much material in this information sheet is drawn from the Centre for an Ethical Society's 'Questions for Political Parties on Key Social Justice Issue of Concern to Christians'.