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Subject: Budget gives priority to housing for Queenslanders in need
Date: 14 July 2015 9:04 pm
To: aemscott@icloud.com



Media release

Minister for Housing and Public Works and
Minister for Science and Innovation
The Honourable Leeanne Enoch

Budget gives priority to housing for Queenslanders in need

Building housing for Queenslanders in need is one of the priorities in today's State Budget.

Minister for Housing and Public Works Leeanne Enoch said \$312.6 million would be invested in housing for Queenslanders in need.

"We've committed \$183.6 million in capital works across Queensland, upgrading existing properties, purchasing others, and constructing and completing hundreds of other dwellings," Ms Enoch said.

Initiatives in the Department of Housing and Public Works capital program include funding to:

- commence construction of 274 rental units
- complete construction of 258 rental units
- purchase 32 rental units.

Some of Queensland's most marginalised communities will also benefit from the State Budget, with an additional \$129 million allocated for social housing in Indigenous communities.

"This will allow construction to commence on 60 rental units, complete the construction of 207 others, and also upgrade some of our existing social housing stock," Ms Enoch said.

"Throughout this financial year we'll continue to deliver on our election commitments, particularly re-establishing a Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service.

"After the LNP Government cut funding to the previous Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service, tenants were left without an independent body to provide advice and support services in an area where disputes can be complex, confusing, and intimidating," Ms Enoch said.

"We've already got an interim phone service up and running, but re-establishing the full service will help tenants navigate their way through the tenancy market, and help them know their rights and obligations."

The department will also continue work on re-establishing a dedicated plumbing industry regulatory body within the broader statewide construction industry regulator, undertake a review of security of payment laws for subcontractors, and finalise the review of housing policies to ensure fairness.

While the \$180 million Advance Queensland package forms the centrepiece of the 2015-16 Budget for the Department of Science, Information Technology, and Innovation, there are also a number of other initiatives that will benefit Queenslanders.

These include \$23.324 million through the State Library of Queensland for public library collections and services across the state, including Indigenous Knowledge Centres.

Funding of \$26.2 million has also been provided for the ongoing development of the Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine, which has locations in Townsville, Cairns and Thursday Island.

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