

**AMPLIFY
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Submission to the Senate Select Committee on Intergenerational Housing Inequity

May 2026



About AMPLIFY

AMPLIFY is an independent organisation that brings Australians together to confront hard truths, shape bold solutions and advocate for change - rebuilding the promise of a fair go while we still can.

Our housing policy platform - Solving Australia's Housing Crisis: A promise broken, A plan to rebuild it (Attachment A) - was developed through rigorous evidence synthesis and structured deliberative engagement involving over 18,000 representative Australians.

This cover note sets out AMPLIFY's key points addressing the Committee's terms of reference.

For more information: amplifyaus.org

Date of submission: 20 May 2026



Extent and nature of intergenerational housing inequity

For much of Australia's postwar history, housing was accessible and delivered security for a large majority of Australians. It no longer does. Homeownership rates are in structural decline across every age cohort; renters face chronic insecurity and rental growth consistently outpaces incomes; and the social housing safety net has eroded. The system is failing Australians across the board.

Among the consequences of this system-wide failure is a widening intergenerational gap. Without action, the gap will continue to grow.

Fixing Australia's housing system requires lifting homeownership rates, improving rental security, and rebuilding the social housing stock – and that means addressing the policy settings that drive up costs, constrain supply, and entrench the advantages of existing owners. Doing so will also close the intergenerational divide.

Effective laws, policies, practices, and services

The most effective responses share three characteristics: they expand housing supply at scale, reform distortionary tax settings, and provide stable long-term tenure.

Internationally, the **2016 Auckland Unitary Plan upzoning program** is associated with significant increases in housing completion rates and measurable moderation in rents and prices.¹ Singapore represents the strongest international precedent for supply-led reform resolving a structural crisis. Adoption of

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) grew from 10% to 70% of new developments in just eight years under the 'Buildability and Constructability Framework' legislation, explicitly designed to raise productivity.

Countries that ban no-fault evictions, including Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Sweden, and New Zealand, demonstrate that strong tenant protections coexist with proportionally large private rental markets. We know that investment in stable social and affordable housing is worth it. For every \$1 invested in social and affordable housing for adults, \$2.00 is returned and \$2.60 is returned when the investment is for youth.²



1 Greenaway-McGrevy, R. & Phillips, P.C.B. (2023), 'The impact of upzoning on housing construction in Auckland'; Greenaway-McGrevy, R. & So, B.Y.K. (2024), 'Can zoning reform reduce housing costs and rents?'

2 SGS Economics & Housing All Australians (2022). Give me Shelter – The Long-term costs of underproviding public, social and affordable housing. Cost-benefit Analysis report; SGS Economics & Housing All Australians (2024). Leave No Young Australian Behind – The long-term cost of youth homelessness to Australia. Cost-benefit analysis report.

Experience of different population cohorts

Working Australians are shut out of homeownership

Housing inequity is now a mainstream problem, affecting large numbers of Australians despite each generation being better educated than previous ones and holding down good jobs. First home buyers fell to just 22% of mortgage volume in September 2025, below the decade average, while investors reached record lending levels.³

Apart from Darwin, less than 50% of couples aged 25-34 can afford a median-priced home in any capital city in the nation.⁴ This drops to 30% in Perth and 15% in Sydney. Individuals aged 35-44 years are in a stronger purchasing position but still only 40% of couples in Perth could afford a median-priced home and 28% of couples in Sydney.

As a result, homeownership for today's 25-29 year olds has fallen from over 50% in the 1970s to 36%; and for 30-34 year olds, from almost 70% to 50% over the same time period.⁵ This means most Australians are starting a family in a rental or moving far from family and familiar supports for homeownership - neither provide the desired security.

The housing safety net has eroded and vulnerability is spreading

The structural change in homeownership means renters now represent one in three Australians, up from one in four in the 1990s, and younger Australians are the fastest growing share. Renters face low housing

security, worsening affordability and limited choice. The OECD ranked Australia equal last on housing security in 2019, noting landlords' broad rights relative to their tenants, including to evict tenants with no cause and maintaining relatively short-term leases (average less than 12 months).⁶ Advertised rents grew three times faster than wages over the last five years and 75% of renters report housing stress (spending more than 30% of income on rent),⁷ only adding to the near impossible task of affording a home. Rental choices are extremely thin with vacancy rates at all-time lows in the private market and declining social and affordable housing stock in the public market.

Only 5% of capital city rentals are affordable for a single age pensioner after meeting other essential costs.⁸ Among private renters receiving income support, out-of-pocket expenses have increased \$52 since 2018 as rents have risen past incomes, even after receiving Commonwealth Rent Assistance.⁹ Renters are 4 times less likely than outright homeowners to feel very confident about remaining in their home over the next 12 months.¹⁰

The consequences are not abstract: it is the parent who can't tell their child which school they'll be at next year, the worker who declines a promotion requiring relocation because starting the rental search again feels impossible, and the older woman who doesn't report a broken heater for fear of being seen as difficult.

³ ABS, Lending Indicators (September 2025, Cat. 5601.0). Investor lending reached its highest recorded level (\$98 billion committed in the September quarter), while first home buyer demand fell to 22% by volume and 18% by value – below the decade average.

⁴ Cotality Home Value Index (February 2026); calculations use 6.0% p.a., 30-year term, 10% deposit, 30% income servicing threshold; ABS 2021 Census G17 – Total personal income (weekly) by age by sex, by GCCSA.

⁵ ABS Census all years between 1976 and 2001.

⁶ OECD (2019). [Empirical links between housing markets and economic resilience \(EN\)](#). Annex E. Summary statistics of policy variables

⁷ AMPLIFY survey (April 2025), n=4,253 nationally representative respondents.

⁸ AMPLIFY survey (October 2025), op. cit. After accounting for \$379/week for non-housing essentials, a single age pensioner has less than \$300/week for rent; only 5% of capital city rental listings are available below this threshold.

⁹ Department of Social Services administrative data; AMPLIFY, Home Truths survey (October 2025), op. cit. Among private renters receiving income support, 94% are in housing stress and 52% spend more than half their income on rent, even after receiving Commonwealth Rent Assistance (currently \$215.40/fortnight for a single person).

¹⁰ AMPLIFY survey (April 2025), n=4,253

Causes of intergenerational housing inequity

AMPLIFY identifies six structural causes.

1. Restrictive zoning adds approximately \$489,000 to the price of a Sydney dwelling and \$324,000 in Melbourne, value created by public planning decisions that flows overwhelmingly to existing owners.¹¹ Infrastructure deficits and lack of coordination, leaving areas without enabling infrastructure, are holding back over one-third of the potential dwelling yield in every capital city, and 82,500 DA-approved homes in growth areas remain unbuilt.¹²
2. Construction productivity has halved over 30 years while economy-wide productivity rose 49%, directly constraining supply response.¹³
3. Taxes that disincentivise making the best use of existing housing: stamp duties penalise moving and reduce housing mobility, particularly amongst under 25s and over 65s in short-distance moves - precisely those that seek to right-size.¹⁴
4. Federal and State tax settings that don't incentivise new supply and which add to the cost of construction: By way of example, 83% of loans to investors that benefit from negative gearing and the CGT discount go to existing (not new) dwellings, inflating prices without adding to supply, and costing the federal budget over \$10 billion per year.¹⁵

5. Minimal tenure security: most Australians rent on 12-month terms or under, creating chronic instability measurably harmful to health outcomes, particularly for families with young children.
6. Chronic under-investment in social housing has seen stock barely grow in 20 years, despite a 33% population increase.

Factors that promote or impede action on housing reform

AMPLIFY's structured deliberative research finds that Australians support comprehensive, evidence-based reform once they understand the trade-offs.

Yet community confidence in governments to deliver the homes Australia needs falls below 50% in every state and territory, and Australia is estimated to be tracking 327,000 homes short of the National Housing Accord target.¹⁶

Regaining the community's confidence is key to reforming the housing system and ultimately addressing intergenerational, and other, inequity.

11 Kendall, R. & Tulip, P. (2018), 'The Effect of Zoning on Housing Prices', Reserve Bank of Australia Research Discussion Paper 2018-03. The study estimated zoning added approximately \$489,000 to the average Sydney property (42% of total property value), \$324,000 in Melbourne and \$159,000 in Brisbane.

12 National Growth Areas Alliance (2025), Beyond Bricks: Unlocking Growth Area Housing.

13 Productivity Commission (2025), Housing Construction Productivity: Can We Fix It? CEDA (2025). The number of dwellings built per hour worked declined 53% over the past 30 years while economy-wide labour productivity rose 49%.

14 e61 Institute (2024). Understanding Australia's Decline in Housing Mobility.

15 Parliamentary Budget Office (April 2025), Cost of Negative Gearing and Capital Gains Tax Discount, Table A1 (residential property); ABS, Lending Indicators, cat. no. 5601.0, Table 13 (Investors; By detailed purpose; New loan commitments), December Quarter 2025 release.

16 AMPLIFY survey (April 2025).

Policy, legislative and other options

AMPLIFY's Housing Policy Platform sets out ten interconnected reforms, developed by experts and backed by the Australian community. We highlight six reforms with the strongest evidence base for improving Australia's housing system – reforms that will expand supply, improve affordability, and strengthen security for all Australians:

- Density reform: Allowing up to 3 storeys in all capital cities; up to 6 storey development near transport corridors; and properly coordinating and funding enabling infrastructure.¹⁷
- Modern methods of construction: Removing pipeline, regulatory, skills and finance barriers to prefabricated and modular housing.¹⁸
- Stamp duty to land tax: A national transition supported by Commonwealth funding.¹⁹
- Tax review: 2026 Budget changes to negative gearing and CGT are expected to boost homeownership rates and better incentivise new supply. However, a broader tax review is needed of all Federal and State taxes impacting housing.²⁰
- Tenancy reform: Completing implementation of the Better Deal for Renters agreed in August 2023; and establishing settings that encourage longer-term tenancies.
- Social and affordable housing: Restoring social housing to 6% of stock (currently under 4%).²¹

Impact: AMPLIFY modelling estimates that its community-backed reform package could yield over 1 million additional homes, more than 500,000 additional homeowners, and thousands of additional construction workers over a decade.

AMPLIFY urges this Committee to make specific, measurable recommendations across all six of the reform domains identified above, with clear Commonwealth accountability mechanisms and timelines. AMPLIFY is available to provide further evidence or briefings.



Learn more
www.amplifyaus.org

