



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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# **Budget will help struggling renters but big challenges remain**

Australia's peak body for homelessness says tonight's Federal Budget will put desperately needed dollars in the hands of struggling renters, which will provide some relief to their rental stress. But the huge challenge of inadequate supply of social housing and overstretched homelessness services remains to be addressed.

Homelessness Australia CEO Kate Colvin said the increase in the base rate of JobSeeker, Youth Allowance and Austudy was welcome but will be quickly eclipsed by further rental increases.

"The increase to income support payments means more desperately needed dollars will be in the hands of renters struggling to make ends meet. Every dollar helps. But unfortunately, many recipients will still be trading water and more rent rises are expected. The truth is, the housing crisis and pressure on homelessness services will continue," Ms Colvin said.

"An opportunity was missed to invest in a rapid rehousing fund to acquire properties that could be almost immediately made available to homeless families.

"While the Budget includes a financial surplus, it has left a social deficit of unresolved homelessness that will create hardship for families and financial costs to the community in future years.

"Other investments that will have a positive impact on reducing homelessness include the resources for First Nations remote housing in the Northern Territory, as well as programs to respond to domestic and family violence for women and children in First Nations communities.

We also welcome the government's decision to extend the investment in funds for the Equal Remuneration Order by one year, to expand eligibility for Parenting Payment Single, and to increase income support for people who have been unemployed for more than nine months and who are over 55."

**To arrange an interview call Nick Lucchinelli 0422 229 032**