

9 September 2023

Gavin Pearce calls for North-West inclusion in housing plan talks

Federal Braddon MP Gavin Pearce has blasted Housing Minister Julie Collins and the government for not holding North-West and West Coast-based consultation sessions to address the housing crisis.

The government is holding the sessions around the country, including in Launceston and Hobart, as part of the development phase of its National Housing and Homelessness Plan.

But the North-West and West coasts have been snubbed as locations, with Ms Collins failing to answer why the region had been left off the map.

Mr Pearce said he could not forgive a minister from Tasmania neglecting rural and regional areas of the state.

"I've come to accept that the Albanese government has little interest in the challenges rural and regional Australians are facing," Mr Pearce said.

"The Minister for Housing, Julie Collins, is a Tasmanian, therefore, I cannot forgive this decision not to hold one of the public consultations in rural Tasmania - an undertaking she has made for every other state in Australia.

"Our region is facing the most significant housing crisis in living memory, brought about by our unique geographical circumstances, circumstances that the two large cities, Hobart and Launceston (where the consultations have been scheduled) do not have.

"Our region is important, the engine room of the state's economy and key to our ongoing prosperity.

"This will never be realised unless a solution is found to our housing crisis.

"I urge Minister Collins to get out of her Hobart bubble and schedule a public consultation on the North-West Coast."

Ms Collins assured North-West and West Coast residents that they had not been forgotten, saying she recently attended a forum with representatives from the Devonport City, Burnie City and the West Coast councils in Burnie to discuss housing issues in the region.

This was in addition to her opening new social housing at Shorewell Park in July.

Ms Collins also sent a letter to Mr Pearce, seeking his support to promote opportunities for consultation in the development of the National Housing and Homelessness Plan within the region.

"I was pleased to recently visit the North-West Coast to discuss housing issues directly with community representatives, and to hear from residents who have faced housing challenges," she said.

"North-West and West Coast residents can be assured I will keep this feedback in mind as the government develops the new National Housing and Homelessness Plan.

"I encourage North-West and West Coast residents to contribute to the development of the government's new National Housing and Homelessness Plan.

"This can be done in a variety of ways including completing a quick online survey, joining an online consultation or by making a written submission if internet access is an issue."

To register for the Hobart (September 26), Launceston (September 28) or online sessions (September 21 and 30), visit: <https://engage.dss.gov.au/developing-the-national-housing-and-homelessness-plan/developing-the-national-housing-and-homelessness-plan-public-consultations>

To provide a written submission, send it to: National Housing and Homelessness Plan, Department of Social Services, GPO Box 9820, Canberra, ACT 2601.

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