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Indi Clarke - Koorie Youth Council

Linda Bamblett - Victoria Aboriginal Community Services Association (VACSAL)

Lionel Bamblett - Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc (VAEAI)

Michael Graham - Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS)

Helen Kennedy - Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO)

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Aboriginal leaders call on the State Government to implement the Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework and take real, concerted action now to begin to fix the homelessness crisis in our community.

Every year thousands of our people are denied the safety, security and stability that can only be provided by a home.

The framework reveals that one-in-six Aboriginal people in Victoria will seek homeless support this year. It is the highest and fastest growing rate of Aboriginal homelessness in the country. If mainstream Victoria experienced housing crisis at this rate more than one million people would be seeking homelessness assistance every year.

These statistics are unacceptable and unavoidable for Aboriginal people in the supposed most progressive state in Australia.

The dispossession and disempowerment homelessness creates is ongoing, traumatic and worsening.

Homelessness is one of the largest contributing factors of Aboriginal disadvantage in Victoria. It is a major driving factor in family violence, child removal, growing incarceration rates, youth homelessness, low educational outcomes, and poor health and mental health outcomes for Aboriginal people.

The Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework is a landmark moment for the Victorian Aboriginal community and our relationship with government.

It is the first time in Australia that a detailed policy framework of this scale has been led by the Aboriginal community, for the community. The Victorian government should be commended for committing to and supporting this process.

Now comes the real challenge for the community and the government.

The scale of the crisis requires immediate short-term action to alleviate the worst of the problems and a genuine commitment to a long-term target to reduce Aboriginal homelessness by 10 per cent per year until it resembles the rate of other Victorians. We have been homeless in our own country for more than 200 years. It is long past time for that to change.

The solutions outlined in the framework are backed by community experience and evidence of what works. The Victorian government can lead by example and begin implementing these policy solutions today.

We need action, not just promises.

We call on the Victorian Government to affirm its commitment to self-determination, listen to what our community needs, and begin the long work of ending Aboriginal homelessness in this state.



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VACCA
Connected by culture



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Caring for the Community