



ACT  
Shelter

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## ACT becomes first in Australia to enshrine housing as a human right

ACT Shelter has today celebrated the passage of landmark legislation that makes the ACT the first jurisdiction in Australia to enshrine housing as a human right in law.

ACT Shelter CEO, Ms Corinne Dobson, said the passage of the Bill is a historic victory for the community sector and the thousands of Canberrans struggling in the midst of a housing crisis.

“This is a momentous step forward. Housing is not a commodity – it is a human right. By embedding this principle in law, the ACT has shown national leadership and taken a vital step toward ensuring that every person has the dignity, security and opportunity that a home provides.”

“ACT Shelter, alongside ACTCOSS, Canberra Community Law, and many other community organisations, has campaigned for this reform for more than two decades. Today’s decision reflects years of advocacy, partnership, and persistence across the sector.”

Ms Dobson emphasised that while the legislation will not resolve the housing crisis overnight, it will provide a powerful legal and policy framework to guide government decision-making in the years ahead.

“The right to housing in law creates a clear standard against which governments must measure their policies and budgets. This reform isn’t just symbolic – it’s a practical tool that will help us shape a more inclusive housing system and hold decision-makers to account.”

Enshrining human rights into law will require future legislation to demonstrate compliance with the right to housing, and mandate the government and its agencies to consider the right to housing when developing policies and practices and making discretionary decisions.

“We know the housing challenges facing Canberrans are immense, but this reform provides a foundation for accountability and long-term progress. ACT Shelter looks forward to working with government, housing providers, and the community sector to ensure this right becomes a lived reality.”

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*ACT Shelter is a not-for-profit peak body providing an informed and independent voice on housing policy issues affecting the ability of Canberrans on low, moderate or no incomes to have an affordable, safe and secure home.*