

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Statement

HON CHARLES SMITH (East Metropolitan) [6.30 pm]: I want to say a few words this evening about housing affordability, the push to put Australians inside shoeboxes to live, the rise of shonky building practices, and the action I believe that the government needs to take. With home ownership on the decline in Western Australia and homelessness rising, fake policymakers with their mates in the fake news media are managing to slowly convince people into believing that stuffing people into glorified caravans, shoeboxes and trailer parks is now in their best interests. In short, it is a fake remedy to housing affordability. Only yesterday, the ABC ran a property propaganda piece to convince Australians to buy these shoeboxes. Over the weekend I noticed a piece in a Canadian newspaper, which I want to relate to the house. It demonstrates quite nicely the brainwashing that has taken place. It states —

There is nothing small about the tiny-home craze ...

From flat pack, self-assembly cabins, to repurposed shipping containers, to small homes on wheels, there is now something out there to suit every site and budget.

Delta's Mint Tiny Homes make homes that range in length from 22 to 44 feet, all on wheels, for easy transportation and are RV certified. They range in price from around \$75,000 to \$100,000 ...

...

Because Mint Tiny Homes are on wheels, they don't require foundations or any hook-ups ... They can be used the moment they're driven onto a property.

...

The demand for tiny homes, he says, is growing ...

"If you look at the U.S., and California, there's a new city every month opening up its bylaws for tiny homes. Even Oregon and Texas.

I assume they are the big states —

More and more cities are becoming tiny-home friendly," ...

Buyers are looking to pay around \$75 000 for a 22-foot tiny home or \$100 000 for a 44-foot "family friendly" home. And they come on wheels! Guess what also comes on wheels. That is right—caravans! Before marketeers devised the clever name tiny homes, we called them exactly what they are—that is, caravans and trailer homes. Like the tiny homes, there is no actual ownership, since they come with no land. Caravans and trailer homes have been traditionally used to house the poorest and most marginalised in our society, and are considered one step above homelessness. However, by using the fancy new name of tiny homes, policy fraudsters are passing them off as a fake solution to a housing affordability problem that they have no genuine intention of fixing. It is easier to use marketing spin and propaganda than to address housing affordability at its source. Addressing housing affordability can be done via reforming property taxation, freeing up urban planning, enforcing a sustainable population policy, and, let us face it, if we look at the Premier's own electorate of Rockingham as an example, also increasing investment into public housing. Affordability will not be improved by people going on the TV and radio and saying, "Buy property now, punters!" and sucking people into new subprime rates with Keystart. Stimulating the market does not make it more affordable; it does the opposite.

The truth of the matter is that Australians have been spending much more on housing and receiving a lot less in return. Indeed, the building industry appears to be in a quality-control crisis. As reported by Propertyology, a property analysis company, Australia suffers from —

Same-same mass-produced Lego buildings, appalling governance within the Australian construction industry, embarrassingly poor-quality workmanship, and approximately 40 per cent of the purchase price of a new property representing assorted taxes ...

It further notes —

The governance within Australia's construction industry is as poor as what the Banking Royal Commission exposed for the financial services sector. An entire generation of housing supply has been corrupted by greed, vested interests, and little regard for quality control, safety and consumer best interests.

The sector has totally lost the trust of the buying public.

State and local governments are as much to blame ... as any stakeholder within the construction industry.

The first task is to address the need for all trades to be registered and their qualifications to be assessed as competent. That will go some way to fixing the quality-control problems that appear to be massive across the

property development industry. That is the first step to improving quality. I therefore urge the government and the Minister for Commerce to radically overhaul the construction sector and put the interests of consumers first and foremost. There are far too many stories of people's lives being ruined by shonky building practices.