

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION — APARTMENTS

**403. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Housing:**

I refer to record increases in rental costs in Western Australia and the dramatic reduction in rental property availability and note the build-to-rent land tax relief and off-the-plan transfer duty rebate schemes announced in the budget.

- (1) How many proponents have approached the government to build new apartments specifically for the rental market?
- (2) When does the minister expect those apartments will become available for struggling renters?

**Mr J.N. CAREY replied:**

I thank the member for his question.

- (1)–(2) I am deeply proud to be part of a government that has driven a very clear reform program to accelerate housing delivery. We have done that through many different ways. Of course, we brought in the building bonus grant. In the last financial year, we saw 27 000 building approvals, with 4 000 in the regions. The advice is very clear on that from the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre: as those homes are completed, we will see around 10 000 rentals come into the market. The logic is clear: as homes are completed, new home owners will leave their rental properties and go into those new homes.

We have also announced the housing diversity pipeline. It is a signature reform about identifying lazy land and going out to the market to see what we can secure from that land, whether that is ground leases, build to rent or a social housing return. In fact, we had 60 different organisations—not-for-profits and private developers—express interest in those 12 properties.

The third part, which the member has identified, is the taxation reform that we announced that included a 50 per cent rebate for build to rent. We want to grow the build-to-rent sector because we know—we can look to the eastern states—that build to rent is a model that can deliver a range of rental properties to boost supply. We also announced a 100 per cent rebate on low-cost or affordable apartments because what we know is we want to grow affordable apartments. We have also announced that we are working on and developing a building bonus grant for social housing.

I note that our measures were applauded by, for example, the Property Council of Western Australia, which said these kinds of measures are needed to boost housing supply into the future. I note that the opposition, despite having had nearly one and a half years, has not delivered any measures or suggestions—lots of attacks—to boost any construction. Of course, as the Minister for Planning knows, we have an opposition that opposes infill and opposes apartment dwellings. We want to provide housing choice to Western Australians. Although we have provided support through the building bonus grant, we also want to encourage apartment living so that people can afford to live in the suburbs where they currently reside. This range of measures, including the building bonus grant, our social housing program, our housing diversity pipeline and our measures relating to tax, will all boost housing supply in Western Australia.