



NSW LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Motion 698:

Ms Barham to move—

1. That, while taking into account the inherent difficulties in accurately measuring the rates of homelessness, **this House notes that:**

(a) according to the 2006 National Census, at least 27,374 people were considered homeless in New South Wales,

(b) according to a 2009 report from the Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing (AIHW) entitled “Counting the Homeless”, this figure can be broken down into the following categories:

(i) primary homelessness: at least 3,715 people, or 13 per cent of respondents, were sleeping rough in improvised dwellings,

(ii) secondary homelessness: at least 16,033 people, or 59% of respondents, were staying with friends or relatives, or in short term accommodation provided through formal assistance,

(iii) tertiary homelessness: at least 7,626 people, or 28 per cent of respondents, were sleeping in facilities providing longer term accommodation such as boarding houses,

(c) according to the same AIHW report, there is a significant incidence of homelessness among children and young people in New South Wales, with 10,587 of those counted aged under 24 (39 per cent),

(d) according to the same AIHW report, the number of older homeless people is growing, with 30 per cent of the homeless in New South Wales aged 45 or older, up from 25 per cent in 2001,

(e) it is widely estimated that over 7 per cent of the entire homeless population of New South Wales are Aboriginal, which is well above the 2.2 per cent of the total New South Wales Aboriginal population, and

(f) documented rates of the prevalence of mental health issues in homeless people vary markedly but an extensive research paper published in 1998 by Hodder, Teeson and Burich entitled “Down and Out in Sydney” found that 75 per cent of participants in the study had at least one mental illness, compared to 20 per cent in the general population.

2. That this House further notes:

- (a) the report of the NSW Auditor General entitled “Responding to Homelessness”, dated May 2007,
- (b) the report of New South Wales Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues entitled “Homelessness and low-cost rental accommodation”, dated September 2009,
- (c) the Government’s subsequent response to the report of the Social Issues Committee's inquiry, dated 2010,
- (d) the revised National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness signed on 13 April 2012.

3. That this House strongly supports:

- (a) the continuation of the Premier's Advisory Council on Homelessness, and
- (b) the implementation of the revised Homeless Persons Protocol as soon as possible.

4. That this House calls for:

- (a) the Premier's Advisory Council on Homelessness to be retained and to meet on a regular basis,
- (b) all local councils to have a nominated staff member tasked with the responsibility of ensuring their council adheres to the Homeless Persons Protocol,
- (c) all local councils to be required to report on local initiatives for addressing homelessness in their local government area in their annual report,
- (d) a review of the ten Regional Homeless Action Plans that were developed in July 2010, together with a progress report, and
- (e) the balance of funds allocated to New South Wales under the 2009-10 National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness to be identified for a funding program to support local government to meet the needs of homeless people.

(Notice given 10 May 2012—expires Notice Paper No. 102)