



MEDIA CONFERENCE

RETAIN - REPAIR - REINVEST

Steps of Victorian Parliament House 11:30am – Thursday 11th May

Ms. Margaret Kelly, a 68 year old former adult education teacher, Disability Pensioner, who has lived at the Barak Beacon Public Housing Estate in Port Melbourne for over two decades, has been issued with an eviction notice to leave by the 16th May 2023 by the Victorian State government.

She has asked *Public Housing – Everybody's Business* to assist her gain an appointment with the Victorian Minister for Housing, The Hon. Colin Brooks MP to explain to him the cruel, unfair, humiliating campaign which is being conducted by the Victorian state government as it privatises what is left of the public housing sector in Victoria. State government members have maintained an aggressive and concerted policy of no response towards anybody who contacts them with concerns about the program, and particularly about the thousands of tenants who have now been displaced. Ms. Kelly wishes to explain to the Minister that an alternative based on retaining existing communities, repairing existing estates, and reinvesting in publicly owned and publicly managed housing exists, along with spot purchase of properties, and improving and expanding current public housing stocks. To date all requests from the Save Barak Beacon group for a meeting with the Minister have not received a response.

At midday on Thursday 11th May, supporters of the Save Barak Beacon group and Ms. Margaret Kelly's attempts to instil some sense in the current housing debate will be accompanying her to 50 Lonsdale St, Melbourne (Minister for Housing office) to ensure the Minister grants Ms. Kelly a meeting to address her concerns about public housing and her impending eviction.

BIG HOUSING BUILD (BHB) – CON OF THE CENTURY

Social, Community, affordable, inclusive housing is privately owned and privately managed housing – it is **NOT**, as has been trumpeted by the Victorian state government, public housing – publicly owned and publicly managed.

At the Barak Beacon Estate, the Victorian state government aims to replace 89 publicly owned two and three bedroom family homes, which house at least 250 residents, with 350 or more privately owned units. Only 100 of these will be “social housing” and they will be small community housing units, a more expensive and less secure option for future residents. No public housing will be built on the site. The same thing is happening all over Victoria. The state government is giving away public land to private interests to build private housing.





PUBLIC HOUSING – EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

The privatisation of aged care, early childhood development, the Commonwealth Bank, the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories (CSL), essential services, and water have come at a very high cost for all Australians. The privatisation of public housing is a disaster. In an era when housing

affordability is the issue on everybody's lips, what the Victorian state government is doing has everything to do with ideology and nothing to do with practical realities.

Increasing public housing stocks not only puts a roof over people's heads it increases sorely needed competition in the residential marketplace. The more public housing that is built, the less need for rental properties. Prices at the lower end of the residential market place will fall and rents will decrease. At the same time educational outcomes and social stability will improve because public tenants have housing security which ensures children do not have to change schools and readjust to a new environment every time they have to move. Public housing rents are fixed at 25% of a residents' income, ensuring much needed financial support is enjoyed by small businesses in the local community.

The Victorian state government, faced with an opposition that is little more than disorganised rabble, has to date been able to do what it likes with public housing with minimal political consequences.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

The Victorian state government's fixation with spending billions of dollars removing railway crossings and digging tunnels, highlights they have forgotten their primary responsibility is to the people of Victoria, not the construction industry.

In the next 12 months, Victorian real estate stamp duty revenue, from residential sales, could top 6 billion dollars. A tax that is levied on the sale of residential property should be used to spot purchase and build public housing. Up to 100,000 Victorians could be housed every year in public housing if residential stamp duty revenue was quarantined to expand the public housing sector.

Please come along to the **Media Conference** at 11:30am on Thursday 11th May to hear Margaret Kelly's concerns for herself, other public tenants facing eviction and the public housing sector.

Then at midday, accompany Margaret and her supporters to the Minister for Housing office at 50 Lonsdale St, Melbourne to ensure she is given an appointment with The Hon. Colin Brooks MP to air her concerns about the parlous state of public housing.

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