



Legislative Council

17 June 2026

Ms Marlo Baragwanath
Victorian Ombudsman
Level 2, 570 Bourke Street
Melbourne, VIC 3000

Dear Ms Baragwanath,

Referral pursuant to section 16 of the *Ombudsman Act 1973*

I am writing to inform you that on Wednesday 17 June 2026, the Legislative Council agreed to the following resolution referring a matter to you for investigation and report:

That this House —

(1) notes —

- (a) on 20 September 2023, the Government released Victoria’s Housing Statement, outlining its intention to demolish Victoria’s 44 high-rise public housing towers and redevelop the land;
- (b) the Government commenced relocation of residents in the following three initial tranches of public housing towers —
 - (i) tranche 1: Carlton, Flemington and North Melbourne;
 - (ii) tranche 2: South Yarra and Richmond;
 - (iii) tranche 3: Flemington, Kensington, North Melbourne, Prahran, St Kilda and Albert Park – all housing residents aged over 55;

(2) pursuant to section 16 of the *Ombudsman Act 1973*, refers the following matters to the Ombudsman for investigation and report —

(a) the impact on residents at the first three tranches of public housing to be demolished of the project to date, including but not limited to

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- (i) moving from homes owned and managed by the Government (public housing) to homes managed by not-for-profit agencies (community housing), including how this affects rental and utility payments and other costs such as utilities, access to enforceable, transparent and protective rental policies and security of tenure, as well as residents’ mental, social and physical wellbeing;
- (ii) the adequacy of the homes offered to the residents required to relocate, including location, general standard, and suitability of the homes to each resident’s unique housing requirements and any impacts from the Government’s reliance on using privately owned housing to relocate residents (‘head-leasing’ arrangements);

- (iii) the outcomes for residents who refuse homes offered for relocation;
 - (iv) the impact on residents living in towers where the majority of the other residents have relocated;
 - (v) the practices and methods of contact employed by the Government, Homes Victoria, agencies and relocation staff to secure relocation, and whether these are compatible with the human rights of the residents, which could include but is not limited to —
 - (A) communication and confusion around residents’ “right to return”;
 - (B) communication around the differences between community and public housing;
 - (C) limiting the number of homes offered for relocation;
 - (D) consequences communicated to residents should they not agree to relocate or accept offers;
 - (b) the specific impacts on elderly public housing residents in tranche 3, with regards to paragraph (2)(a);
 - (c) the timeliness and adequacy of the Government’s maintenance of all 44 public housing towers, particularly in comparing the periods before and after the announcement on 20 September 2023, and the ongoing impact on residents;
 - (d) whether, having regard to all the circumstances, the demolition of the public housing towers is the best course of action; and
- (3) requires the Clerk to write to the Victorian Ombudsman to convey the terms of this Resolution.

Pursuant to section 25AB of the *Ombudsman Act 1973*, where a matter is referred to the Ombudsman by the Legislative Council under section 16, the Ombudsman shall send the report to the President of the Legislative Council.

Yours sincerely,



Robert McDonald
Clerk of the Legislative Council