



**12 March 2015**

### **Vinnies commends Baird government's visionary investment in affordable and social housing**

The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW commends the Baird government's announcement this afternoon that it will pledge \$1 billion from the proposed leasing of electricity networks towards the establishment of an Affordable Housing Growth Fund.

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW, CEO Michael Perusco says that in making this bold \$1 billion investment, Premier Baird is sending a powerful message to policymakers, advocates and the community that social and affordable housing must be seen as a priority.

"The Society has been at the discussion table advocating for funds from the proposed leasing of electricity networks in NSW to be invested in the establishment of a government backed social and affordable housing fund that will trigger a significant expansion in investment in social and affordable housing supply."

"We have always said that investment in social housing should be seen as a form of infrastructure investment, so it is a great outcome to see an innovative plan which will increase and revitalise our stock of social and affordable housing. This new vision for social housing has the capacity to overcome existing barriers and unlock a new flow of construction investment," says Mr Perusco.

Mr Perusco explains that the Society continues to call for other key reforms of social housing including that the NSW Government expedite the transfer of public housing properties to community housing providers via long term leases and the inclusion of affordable housing targets for local government.

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW President Ray Reynolds says that the Society is present in more than 400 communities across the state with members visiting almost 600 people in crisis every day.

"This places the Society in a unique position to understand the real impacts of housing affordability and social housing issues. People are telling us very clearly that unaffordable housing and rents are putting enormous pressure on their ability to survive," says Mr Reynolds.

The St Vincent de Paul Society adds that the reform of social and community housing should be firmly on the agenda for all political parties as we head into the NSW State election.

**Media:** Yolanda Saiz | 0417 446 430