

MEDIA RELEASE

A hand up right now makes sound economic sense

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The National Council of the St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia has called on the Federal Government to implement several key social policy issues that if addressed in the 2021-22 Budget, would significantly improve the lives of many Australians, and stimulate economic growth.

National Council President, Claire Victory said such measures include increasing the base rate of the old Newstart payment on an ongoing basis, supporting people who are currently falling through the cracks and increasing access to affordable, safe and energy efficient housing.

‘We know that fiscal stimulus measures are most effective if you ‘go early and go hard’, especially if those measures are directed to households most in need, including those most impacted by the pandemic,’ Ms Victory said.

‘The measures we have outlined in our budget submission support domestic production, target regional disadvantage and provide direct employment and co-benefits.

‘Although the Federal Government’s short-term welfare, cash flow and wage subsidy measures have been welcomed, ongoing support that reflects the losses incurred and is specific and targeted to those who need it most, is now essential,’ Ms Victory said.

The National Council’s Pre-Budget Submission calls on the Federal Government to:

- Raise the base rate of JobSeeker as a permanent feature of the income support system;
- Scrap the Fair Work Amendment Bill;
- Support asylum seekers, refugees and Temporary Visa Holders;
- Support people being moved from community detention to Final Departure Bridging Visas;
- Support the Status Resolution Support Service;
- Fund social housing to stimulate the economy and address the housing shortfall; and
- Overhaul Commonwealth Rent Assistance to address the housing shortfall and housing stress.

‘Challenges should create opportunities.

‘Now is the time to lift millions of people out of poverty and provide them with a home so that they are empowered to drive change in their own lives, to look for training and employment opportunities and improve their overall social connectedness, health and wellbeing.

‘Revenue could be recovered by reviewing superannuation laws and not proceeding with the next tranche of tax cuts,’ Ms Victory said.

A copy of the National Council’s Pre-Budget Submission 2021-22 is available [here](#).

The St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia consists of 60,000 members and volunteers who operate on the ground through over 1,000 groups located in local communities across the country.

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