



22 April 2025

Mark Gaetani  
National President  
St Vincent de Paul Society National Council of Australia  
Via email: nationalpresident@svdp.org.au

Dear Mr Gaetani

Thank you for writing to the Australian Labor Party and providing the St Vincent de Paul election platform. Please find our response to the key issues you've raised below.

The Albanese Labor Government is committed to a strong and sustainable social safety net that provides support to those most in need, when they need it. Labor has made significant investments to strengthen the safety net, providing an additional \$11.5 billion for social security payments.

This includes delivering a \$40 per fortnight increase to working-age and student payments, including JobSeeker. In recognition that some people can face additional barriers to finding employment and need more support, we also expanded eligibility for the higher rate of Jobseeker to Australians aged 55 and over who are on payment for nine months or more, and to those with an assessed partial capacity to work of 0-14 hours per week.

Since Labor was elected, the base rate of JobSeeker for single recipients with no dependent children has increased by 22 per cent. This is an extra \$3,600 in additional support in people's pockets each year.

In addition, for single parents who face the difficult challenge of balancing work and care on their own, the Government has expanded eligibility for Parenting Payment Single until their youngest child turns 14, up from 8.

These measures have been complemented by the comprehensive cost of living relief delivered by the Albanese Government to ease pressure on households. This includes a tax cut for every Australian taxpayer, two rounds of relief to help households with their energy bills, cheaper medicines on the PBS, freezing social security deeming rates and record investments to strengthen Medicare to make it cheaper to see a GP and establish more Urgent Care clinics.

Labor will always do what we can to provide support to people who need it. We've said we'll look at payment rates as part of every Budget, and we'll continue to do that.

The Albanese Labor Government is tackling the housing crisis with a \$43 billion Homes for Australia plan. Labor is delivering new 55,000 social and affordable homes, through initiatives like the Housing Australia Future Fund. Labor has also invested \$1.2 billion in crisis and transitional accommodation.

While these homes get built, Labor is also providing real relief to renters right now. We've delivered the first back-to-back increases to Commonwealth Rent Assistance in over 30 years, to help people on income support, pensioners and low-income families to manage rental pressures. Combined with indexation, this means maximum rates of rent assistance have increased by 45% since Labor was elected.

The Albanese Labor Government remains committed to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap as the critical framework for delivering improved outcomes for First Nations people. We continue to work in partnership with First Nations peaks and communities to tackle the issues that will make a difference to peoples' lives. We also work closely with the other signatories to the Agreement – all states and territories – to achieve our shared objectives.

We are focused on achieving change and improving the lives of First Nations people through significant investments in economic empowerment and jobs, easing cost of living and food security pressures in remote communities, and improving living conditions and health and wellbeing.

We remain committed to reform that will enable communities to establish locally tailored initiatives that address the underlying causes of incarceration. This includes the delivery of our \$79 million National Justice Reinvestment Program. Justice reinvestment is a long-term, community-led approach to preventing crime, improving community safety and reducing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in contact with the justice system.

Australia has a long and proud history of providing resettlement for refugees and others who are displaced as a result of conflict, persecution and human rights abuses. With more people displaced worldwide than ever before, we are stepping up to play our part in the global resettlement effort in a responsible way.

The Albanese Labor Government increased the number of places in Australia's humanitarian program from 13,750 to 20,000 places in 2023-24 and we have maintained this number of places for the 2024-25 program. In contrast, Peter Dutton and the Liberal Party have committed to cutting the humanitarian program back to 13,750 places if they are elected.

Additionally, more than 20,000 Resolution of Status visas have been issued to former Temporary Protection visa/Safe Haven Enterprise visa holders since the pathway opened in February 2023. People on TPVs/SHEVs arrived before Operation Sovereign Borders, and had been living in limbo in Australia for more than a decade.

The previous Government left thousands of people, who had been subject to the Fast Track process, in limbo for more than a decade. This was one aspect of the broken migration system the Albanese Government inherited.

In October 2024 the Albanese Labor Government abolished the Immigration Assessment Authority (IAA), ending the last remnant of the Fast Track assessment process. Any individual with an ongoing application for asylum who was before the IAA has been transferred to the Administration Review Tribunal, and individuals will have their matters reviewed in the same way as any other protection visa applicant.

The Albanese Labor Government has focused on providing people who engage Australia's protection obligations a chance to continue their lives in Australia with certainty and security and has provided these individuals with a permanent pathway through the Resolution of Status visa.

Thank you again for your advocacy.

Yours Sincerely  
ALP National Campaign 2025