

Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelands

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Labor's \$70m unpaid rent write-off

The cash-strapped Fyles Labor Government needs to explain to Territorians why \$70m of remote rental debts were wiped.

Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelands Bill Yan said during the 2022 Estimates hearings, the CLP Opposition uncovered that there was more than \$60m in unpaid rent from remote housing.

"We now see in media reports that \$70m of remote rent has now been written off because of Government incompetence," he said.

"Only a month ago the Minister said her department was undertaking a process to look at the uncollected rent and now she is writing it off.

"It has not been explained how the unpaid remote housing rents have also increased from \$60 million to \$70 million in just over a month. Where is this \$10m discrepancy from?

"Is this just remote housing that's owed, or is there more money owed for urban housing again? The minister needs to come clean on that number too."

Mr Yan said this was \$70m of Territory taxpayer money that is being written off because the Fyles Labor Government failed to appropriately manage remote housing.

"Where is the transparency and honesty in the estimates process? The Minister at the time obviously knew that writing it off was a likely outcome but she deliberately chose not to disclose it during the Estimates process, or was the Minister just trying to hide this option from Territorians?"

"This is the same Government who consistently campaigned on the grounds of honesty and transparency and here we see another example of cover-ups and concealment."

It comes at the end of the 2022 Homelessness Week, where the incompetence from the Fyles Labor government was again in the spotlight.

Mr Yan said as at Friday, July 29 2022, there were 5,941 applications on the NT public housing waiting list, and only 162 vacant urban homes.

"The Territory Labor Government's NT Homelessness Strategy 2018-23 has failed to deliver sufficient improved housing and support at the rate required to tackle the huge public housing waiting lists," he said.

"There are many questions which remain unanswered and this Government continues to sit in silence on the issues that matter most to Territorians."

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