



**SELECT COMMITTEE ON COST OF LIVING PRESSURES IN THE ACT**

Mr Johnathan Davis MLA (Chair), Dr Marisa Paterson MLA (Deputy Chair), Ms Nicole Lawder MLA

**ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

Asked by Ms Lawder MLA on 13 April 2023: Andrew Barr MLA took on notice the following question(s):

[Ref: Hansard Uncorrected Proof Transcript Page 56]

In relation to: Inputs into Budget development process

MS LAWDER: Thank you. Earlier today we heard from a witness who referred a motion in the Assembly from 6 October 2021 calling on the government to review and update the ACT's targeted assistance strategy. You might have been busy doing other things on that particular day like budget and Ms Berry responded on your behalf in the Assembly.

And it was suggested that that could inform the 2022-23 budget. Can you confirm if that review took place and if so—because it does not appear to be tabled in the Assembly.

Mr Barr: There was an internal government review and an examination through the budget process of our concession program. So, the outcomes were retained within budget decisions around, for example, extending eligibility for certain programs, extending quantum of money provided. I will take on notice the, probably in the budget papers but I will take that on notice and provide you with that.

Andrew Barr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

The Government announced a number of targeted assistance measures including improvements to concessions in both the 2022-23 Budget and the 2022-23 Budget Review. This included:

1. providing an additional one-off increase to the Utilities Concession of \$50 in 2022-23, to support low-income households facing increased cost of living due to rising consumer prices;
2. continuing the Vulnerable Household Energy Support Scheme to provide support for community housing providers, eligible private rental providers and low-income homeowners to install insulation and efficient electrical appliances, replacing gas appliances as appropriate;
3. expanding Motor Vehicle Registration concessions to include ACT Services Access and Commonwealth Low Income Health Care card holders;

4. re-establishing the Rent Relief Fund to provide targeted, short-term support for low-income households who are experiencing rental stress or severe financial hardship;
5. raising the lowest conveyance duty tax threshold for residential owner-occupiers from \$200,000 to \$260,000, which will reduce duty on homes between \$260,000 and \$1,455,000 by \$1,120, when combined with ongoing tax rate reductions;
6. increasing the Home Buyer Concession Scheme income eligibility threshold from \$160,000 to \$170,000 (the threshold continues to increase by \$3,330 per child up to a maximum of five children);
7. increasing the Deferred Duty and Disability Duty Concession Schemes price eligibility thresholds from \$750,000 to \$1 million; and
8. setting out an ambitious program to increase the supply of affordable rental accommodation through Build-to-Rent.

The Government considers potential changes to concession and assistance programs as part of every budget process. We are currently considering further measures to assist households with cost-of-living pressures as part of the 2023-24 Budget.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Cost of Living Pressures in the ACT

Signature: 

Date: **2.5.23**

By the Treasurer, Andrew Barr MLA