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## Peak Bodies Warn Homelessness Under Albanese Government at Historic Highs

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Homelessness in Australia has reached unprecedented levels under the Australian Labor Party (ALP) government, with peak bodies describing the crisis as the worst in living memory. This article examines the surge in homelessness, the strain on services, and growing criticism of federal policies amid a deepening housing crisis.

The Productivity Commission's 2025 Report on Government Services reveals a 25% rise in persistent homelessness since 2019, with 122,494 Australians homeless on Census night 2021, equating to 48.2 per 10,000 people (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare , 13 February 2025). Mission Australia's CEO Sharon Callister called the situation "grim," noting a 26% increase in demand for their services over three years, with over 50,000 people denied crisis accommodation in 2023–24 due to a lack of housing (Mission Australia, 31 January 2025). Homelessness Australia's CEO Kate Colvin highlighted that 75,000 people seeking long-term housing annually are turned away, underscoring a "dysfunctional housing system" (The Saturday Paper, 26 April 2025).

The ALP's \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF), touted to build 30,000 affordable homes by 2029, has been criticised as inadequate against a shortfall of over 500,000 dwellings (World Socialist Web Site, 7 January 2025). Housing construction fell 8.8% in 2023–24, the worst decline in a decade, making the government's target of 1.2 million homes under the National Housing Accord "impossible," according to Master Builders Australia (World Socialist Web Site, 7 January 2025). Critics argue the fund prioritises property developers over vulnerable Australians, with only 18,000 homes funded so far (Department of Industry, 22 March 2025).

The AIHW reports 272,689 clients received some support in 2023–24, but 34.9% of those needing accommodation were unmet, up from 33.9% in 2021–22 (AIHW, 13 February 2025). As rental stress affects 42.9% of low-income households despite Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA), calls grow for systemic reform to address root causes like housing

shortages and cost-of-living pressures (Mission Australia, 22 January 2024).