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Dutton's Migration Stance Hurt Coalition, Says Bragg

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Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelessness Andrew Bragg has said that the Coalition's approach to the May 2025 federal election contributed to its loss, particularly its focus on linking migration to Australia's housing crisis.

In comments following the election, Bragg stated that framing migrants as the cause of housing shortages alienated sections of the electorate. He also referred to voter concerns about policies discussed during the campaign, such as potential deportations for certain dual nationals. Bragg said this narrative had been an ineffective starting point for the Coalition's campaign.

The May 2025 federal election resulted in the Australian Labor Party (ALP) winning 94 seats in the House of Representatives. The Liberal Party and its Coalition partners saw a reduction in their representation.

Bragg also acknowledged that the Coalition did not release a homelessness policy before the election. He said that increasing housing supply should be the starting point for addressing homelessness and stated that this would be a focus for future policy development.

He criticised the ALP's performance on housing, citing figures showing that 67,000 new dwellings were approved between September 2023 and September 2024. Bragg said this level of construction was below what is required to reduce housing pressures. He also noted that homelessness had increased during the ALP's term in government.

According to official data, net overseas migration reached 548,800 people in the year to September 2023. Bragg said that while migration levels affect housing demand, the Coalition should prioritise policies that address housing supply and affordability.

Bragg said the Coalition would prepare a homelessness policy before the next federal election, scheduled for 2028, with the aim of increasing housing construction. He stated that the policy would focus on measures designed to improve affordability and availability.

Housing affordability and homelessness have been identified as major policy challenges, with supply shortages, population growth, and planning constraints contributing to the issue. Both the government and the opposition have committed to addressing these challenges, but there are differences in their policy approaches.

Bragg's comments indicate a shift in the Coalition's strategy following the election, with a stated intention to balance migration policy with practical measures to boost housing supply. The development of the Coalition's housing and homelessness policy is expected to form a central part of its platform in the next election cycle.