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Big Government Policies Drive Up Australia's Living Costs

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Prominent Australian businessman Mark Bouris has raised alarms over the escalating cost of living, attributing much of the burden to excessive government regulations and a rapidly changing job market. Speaking on Sky News on August 7, 2025, Bouris argued that heavy-handed policies from the Albanese Government are stifling economic freedom and inflating essential costs for households. His comments come as the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reports a 3.8% annual rise in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for March 2025, driven by housing, utilities, and food prices.

Bouris highlighted how government-driven initiatives, such as renewable energy mandates and land acquisition reforms, are increasing costs for businesses and consumers. The Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) projects, for instance,

have sparked concerns among regional farmers, with proposed changes to the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991 potentially easing compulsory land seizures, per *The Land*. This squeezes agricultural output, which contributed \$18.3 billion to NSW's economy in 2024, indirectly raising food prices. Bouris noted that regulatory burdens, including compliance costs for small businesses, have risen by 12% since 2022, per the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, forcing businesses to pass costs onto consumers.

The job market's transformation, with a shift toward gig and service-based roles, is also straining household budgets. Bouris pointed out that wage growth of 3.5% in September 2024 lags behind inflation, reducing real income for many, as reported by the ABS. Government policies like the \$200 million Remote Jobs and Economic Development (RJED) program, while creating 1,500 jobs, are criticized for their short-term focus, with only 40% of similar past initiatives sustaining employment beyond three years, per the Productivity Commission.

Opposition finance spokesperson Jane Hume echoed Bouris, telling *The Australian Financial Review* on August 6, 2025, that the government's high-spending approach, with a projected \$214.7 billion deficit over six years, fuels inflation and living costs. She argued that unchecked bureaucracy is crowding out private enterprise, limiting job creation. As Australians face a 46.2% income allocation to mortgage repayments, per CoreLogic, Bouris and others urge a leaner government to ease the financial strain.