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Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

ANDREW FISHER BUILDING
ONE NATIONAL CIRCUIT
BARTON

Reference: MC23-068124

Mr Peter Jones and Ms Anne Walker
President and National Executive Director
Catholic Religious Australia
PO Box 1518
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2059

Dear Mr Jones and Ms Walker

Thank you for your letter dated 23 August 2023 to the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, the Prime Minister, regarding young Australians. The Prime Minister has asked me to respond on his behalf.

The Australian Government acknowledges the challenges and opportunities facing young Australians, and recognises the importance of consulting with young Australians on policy solutions. The Government is committed to taking action across the areas you have identified to support Australian youth – including addressing intergenerational equality, housing, and supporting access to tertiary education.

The Government is committed to increasing engagement with young Australians and raising the unique issues faced by young people onto the national agenda. The Prime Minister has appointed the Hon Dr Anne Aly MP as Minister for Youth and the Government committed \$10.5 million for the new *Youth Engagement Model* in the October 2022-23 Budget. The new *Youth Engagement Model* will support young Australians to better engage in policy and program design by establishing direct and ongoing channels of two-way communication between government and young people.

Significant investments are also being made to ease the financial pressure on young Australians, including committing \$14.6 billion in the 2023-24 Budget in targeted assistance. This includes \$4.9 billion over five years to increase the base rate of working age and student payments by \$40 per fortnight, automatic indexation of payments and a boost to the maximum rates of Commonwealth Rent Assistance by 15 per cent.

In relation to housing, the Home Guarantee Scheme gives eligible first home buyers and single parents support to purchase a home sooner by reducing the deposit they need to save to buy a house. More than 67,000 people have been helped into home ownership through the Home Guarantee Scheme since the election of the Albanese Government.

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The Housing Australia Future Fund was also recently passed by the Parliament and will provide a funding source to support and increase social and affordable housing, as well as other acute housing needs, including housing improvements, to meet the particular needs of Indigenous communities and housing services for women, children and veterans.

The Government also recognises a world-class education and training system is essential to tackling inequality, driving economic growth and supporting well-paid, secure jobs. The Government is committed to building an accessible and high-quality tertiary education system, including through: delivering the Australian Universities Accord; negotiating a new five-year National Skills Agreement with the states and territories; an additional 20,000 Commonwealth supported places to provide more opportunities for Australians to study in areas of national priority; and financial and non-financial incentives available through the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System.

I hope this information has been useful and I thank you again for writing to the Prime Minister.

Yours sincerely



Rui Jiang
Acting Assistant Secretary
22 September 2023