

LIVING THE DREAM

There is no question that housing affordability continues to be a major issue around the country as home ownership continues its steady decline.

South Australia will no doubt play an important role in this sobering statistic – even more so from 30 June this year following the abolition of the First Home Owner Grant.

President of the Real Estate Institute of South Australia (REISA), Mr Ted Piteo said “We now have a perfect storm in South Australia. Exorbitant property taxes, removal of the First Home Owner Grant and the reining in of State spending means that it is harder than ever for South Australians to invest in their own home”.

REISA therefore welcomes the announcement of the Independent Senator for South Australia, Nick Xenophon, that he will introduce legislation to allow first home buyers to access their superannuation funds for a home deposit.

“Any constructive discussion on how to address the problem of housing affordability is certainly supported by the real estate industry. But we need to actually come up with a solution and not indulge in an endless cycle of inquiries, committees and think tanks. We have to follow the lead from overseas and do something. And do it now”

“Canada has successfully operated a scheme for the last 20 years allowing first home buyers to access up to \$25,000 from their superannuation fund to purchase or build a home. Funds withdrawn must then be repaid over a 15 year period. It’s working – and working well - so why haven’t we had a close look to see whether it could replicate its success here?” Mr Piteo said.

There are other schemes also working successfully in New Zealand, Singapore and the UK that all strive to make home ownership a reality and not a nightmare. These jurisdictions have all done their homework and come up with innovative solutions that actually work.

“All levels of government have to start coming together and listening to what industry and the public are telling them”

“The Commonwealth Government must assess the schemes overseas and determine their suitability and relevance for Australia. The State Government must take a close look at the crippling property taxes that are deterring our first home buyers from entering the market. They need to work together to fix this systemic problem”

“Only then will thousands of South Australians begin to live their dream” Mr Piteo said.