

Aboriginal Housing Victoria

Reform on public drunkenness laws will help to prevent future tragedies

Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV) has welcomed the announcement of legislation to end public drunkenness as an offence in the state.

The announcement follows the release of independent report *Seeing the Clear Light of Day*, which recommends a public health-based response to public drunkenness.

“The laws that are currently in place increase the risk for the kind of tragedies that we have seen in the Aboriginal community,” said Darren Smith, AHV CEO and Aboriginal Executive Council (AEC) member.

“We firmly believe that a health, wellbeing and support approach is the best way to respond to individuals who are publicly intoxicated.”

The legislation is set to be introduced into Parliament by the end of the year.

“We call on Victorian Parliament to act quickly to pass these laws, so that Aboriginal services can work with Government to implement a health-based response model,” said Mr Smith.

Seeing the Clear Light of Day is a tribute to Yorta Yorta woman Tanya Day, who passed away in 2017 after being arrested for public intoxication. AHV extends its thoughts to the family of Ms Day.

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ABOUT ABORIGINAL HOUSING VICTORIA (AHV)

AHV is a not-for-profit registered Housing Association and is the largest Aboriginal housing organisation in Australia. AHV owns 1,556 properties in Melbourne and regional Victoria providing affordable housing to over 4,000 low income Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians.

AHV's vision is that Aboriginal Victorians are able to secure appropriate, affordable housing as a pathway to better lives and stronger communities.