



Brotherhood
of St Laurence

Working for an Australia free of poverty

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Super just the start of an equitable tax system for all Australians

2 May 2010

The Brotherhood of St Laurence responded to today's release of the Rudd Government's response to the Henry Tax Review with cautious optimism. Tony Nicholson, Executive Director said

'We're encouraged to see inequities in superannuation addressed by the Government. This will assist low-income earners build an adequate retirement fund. Too many older Australians who haven't managed to accumulate assets over their working years are left vulnerable to poverty and homelessness. This move strengthens Australia's position as we build a more socially and financially inclusive society.

'The Henry Review itself has picked up on a number of recommendations made by the Brotherhood in areas of housing, rent assistance, income support, retirement income, asset building for low income earners and workforce participation.

'In particular, the recognition that family payments should increase as a child ages rather than decrease, the need to link rent assistance rates with market prices, and that all pensions and allowances should be tax free, are supported by the day-to-day experiences of disadvantaged Australians, and should receive broad-based support

'We hope to see the Rudd government continue its reform journey by tackling further recommendations of the Henry Review, especially in the areas of welfare reform, equitable treatment of housing and incentives to help people build assets though out the life course.'

In its submissions throughout the Henry Review, the Brotherhood identified three key areas in need of taxation reform: income support, housing and superannuation. In particular the Brotherhood hoped to see a restructure of income tax rates and benefits criteria, so that individuals moving from welfare to work are not penalised, and an overhaul of the excessively generous tax treatment of owner occupied and investment property.

'The Henry Review sets out a blueprint for a simpler system that increases workforce participation, economic efficiency and financial inclusion. We welcome the changes to super, and we look forward to working with reform-minded policy makers on a longer term agenda that will secure a tax system that is equitable and efficient for all Australians'

For more information about the Brotherhood's work for a fairer taxation system download key reports from www.bsl.org.au

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