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Beginner's Guide To Changing Aotearoa's Housing Policy

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3 Minutes

The University of Auckland's Public Policy Institute has proposed, through *Transformative Housing Policy for Aotearoa New Zealand: A Briefing Note on Addressing the Housing Crisis*, how the state can tackle its emerging housing crisis.

The ten policies proposed by researchers are the following:

1. The re-establishment of Public Works, which initially fell after giving way to home privatization.
2. Creating a Green Investment Bank in New Zealand to support small businesses and lend for housing. A Māori version of the institution could also be built.
3. A State Lending Agency (Housing Financial Corporation and a Māori version) to make repayment easier and decrease bias and the loan's worth.
4. Parliament should obtain responsibility for mortgage control because of a conflict of interest at the Reserve Bank.
5. Authorizing more leadership in the public sector by inviting more diversity and democratizing the government.
6. "Tino rangatiratanga and self-determination are both rights that have not yet been fully incorporated by the state into domestic legislation" which should be (Paul et al., 2020)
7. Government implementing appropriate taxation in housing.
8. Increasing the number of housings for communities and states has been slightly augmented, but not as fast and much.
9. Increasing the renter's rights.
10. Combating Māori and youth homelessness.

To understand the complexity of the circumstances, we need to learn about the issue, how it occurred, what type of future we envision when it comes to housing, and lastly, how we get there.

The housing crisis originated in colonial times, as land ownership was taken away from Māori to be cultivated by Pākehā to gather monetary means. Since then, the financial aspect of housing has been prioritized more than being viewed as a human right by politicians (Paul, McArthur, King, Harris & Figenshow, 2020).

Researchers found that the failure, brought on by the government's inability to assess the dire situation, can impact generations by creating disparities in health and financial well-being.

Lack of advancement has led to the subsequent recommendations to our parliament. It involves a new model concentrating on “decentring home-ownership, decolonizing housing policy, democratizing housing policy-making, and decommodifying housing” to tackle the issue (Paul et al., 2020).

Firstly, a way of decentring home-ownership is to have the state “decolonized and democratic way) provide owned housing collectively. Secondly, upholding the Treaty of Waitangi will help decolonize housing policy by finally giving Māori rights to “housing and kāinga.” This is vital as Māori only own 5% of land in New Zealand.

Thirdly, democratizing housing policy-making can be enforced by turning to public services and away from the market economy, accrediting governmental institutions with responsibilities over housing, and supporting renters’ unions. Lastly, limiting how housing might gain profit through taxation can decommodify housing.

While minimal progress has been made, it is not enough.

Read more about how our government can stop the housing crisis and how they should be held accountable.

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For more information, contact: Public Policy Institute | Te Whare Marea Tātari Kaupapa, Ph 022 903 4233

To learn more about the proposal:

<https://www.policycommons.ac.nz/2020/10/06/transformative-housing-policy-for-aotearoa-new-zealand/>