

Alberta Public Housing Administrators' Association Annual General Meeting and Education Session

Speech by Minister Lori Sigurdson

- Thank you for inviting me to join you for your Spring Education Session and Annual General Meeting.
- It is a pleasure to be here and bring greetings on behalf of Premier Notley and my government colleagues.
- I would like to acknowledge we are gathered today on the traditional territory of Treaty 6.
- And I am proud to acknowledge the Metis people of Alberta who share a deep connection and history with this land.
- The Alberta Public Housing Administrators' Association is a key stakeholder, partner and advisor to my ministry.
- Our government has a close working relationship with the association.
- We place great value on our partnership.
- You are on the front lines, making life better for those who need housing supports.
- And you provide strong leadership on housing issues in our province while encouraging the continued development and education of your members.
- I admire your commitment to providing safe, affordable places to live for Albertans with low income, a goal our government shares.
- I welcome the opportunity to share some of the good work that has been done since we were last together.

- Through our partnership, we run housing programs that serve more than 110,000 Albertans.
- They live in more than 70,000 housing units that are owned or supported by our government, but operated by you.
- We could not serve those Albertans without you.
- More than 100 housing management bodies operate government-owned and supported housing.
- Thank you for being by our side and for your efforts to make life better for Albertans.
- Last year, I had the opportunity to thank you for the valuable input you provided to build a better affordable housing system.
- You were among the more than 1,800 Albertans we engaged through surveys and public sessions.
- The feedback was instrumental in shaping our way forward.
- In June 2017, I was honoured to announce the first Provincial Affordable Housing Strategy.
- The strategy goes beyond the bricks and mortar of a house.
- It prioritizes people and focuses on their successes and well-being.
- The strategy provides tenants of government-supported affordable housing with the tools they need to achieve success.
- It will improve how affordable housing is delivered to Albertans to better address current and future tenant needs.
- We are committed to continuing our collaboration with you to build an effective and sustainable affordable housing system.
- Now I would like to take a few minutes and talk about our recent Budget 2018 and our government's fiscal plan for our province.

- I am proud of this budget that continues to protect vital public services.
- We believe services like affordable housing need stable and predictable funding.
- Our government supported Albertans through the recession.
- And now we will continue to support them through an economic recovery that is underway.
- Our government continues its commitment to invest \$1.2 billion in affordable housing.
- But that's not all.
- We also continue to support Alberta's housing providers.
- Budget 2018 allocates an additional \$11.2 million so you can catch up on maintenance.
- I know the serious maintenance deficit in housing across the province is a challenge for many of you.
- We will continue to provide capital grants and investment to develop new affordable housing.
- We are also investing in the new Capital Indigenous Housing program.
- Last year, we went on a listening tour to help us build a plan for off-reserve Indigenous Affordable housing.
- The information we gathered helped develop policy recommendations and the plan.
- Soon, we will begin accepting Indigenous Affordable Housing proposals for consideration as part of Capital Plan 2019.
- This year, we also plan on adding 400 spaces towards our goal of 4,100 new and restored units by 2021.

- My ministry has also allocated \$2 million per year to plan for housing projects that will provide a pipeline of future capital investment in housing.
- And we amended the *Alberta Housing Act* to modernize the regulatory framework.
- Our government is providing stable and predictable funding to our seniors and housing programs directly supporting Albertans.
- Budget 2018 will help our economy grow and diversify.
- It takes us on a path to balance – controlling spending and eliminating waste.
- And it protects vital public services for Albertans ...
- Maintaining stable funding for seniors and Albertans with low income
- And continuing to ensure a supply of affordable housing for Albertans who need it.
- Alongside our partners like you, we are helping to make life better for Albertans.
- I want to thank you again for your advice, partnership, and work over the past year.
- We are making progress towards our goal
- Ensuring Albertans with low income can access housing they need to have fulfilled, successful lives.
- But I know we still have much work to do.
- There are new and exciting challenges ahead of us.
- So, I ask for your continued support in the months ahead.
- We simply cannot do this work without you.
- Thank you so much for your time.