# Prime Minister faced tough questioning over housing and energy policy in tense interview



Prime Minister Anthony Albanese faced a challenging and tense interview with ABC's Sarah Ferguson on Monday night’s 7.30 program, during which he was pressed on various aspects of Labor's housing policy and other campaign promises ahead of the May 3 federal election.

The interview rapidly became a test for the Prime Minister as Ferguson rigorously questioned him on past statements from Federal Treasurer Jim Chalmers, which appeared to contrast with Labor’s current stance on housing affordability. Ferguson revisited comments Chalmers made in 2017 criticising the Coalition government for not addressing negative gearing and capital gains tax policies, key levers in housing affordability debates.

Quoting Chalmers’s parliamentary remarks, Ferguson said, “They are not prepared to pull the meaningful lever when it comes to housing affordability and that is dealing with negative gearing and capital gains tax... As a consequence they will not do anything meaningful about housing affordability in this country particularly for young people.” She repeatedly asked whether Chalmers’s earlier position was incorrect in light of Labor’s present approach.

Mr Albanese defended Chalmers, describing him as “a terrific treasurer,” but declined to directly address whether the earlier criticism was mistaken. Instead, he emphasised his government’s commitment to increasing housing supply as the primary solution to the crisis, asserting, “I'm looking for people to have access to good quality housing, to have the security in life that comes from having a secure roof over your head.” When pressed about whether reforming negative gearing or capital gains tax would ever happen under his leadership, Albanese pointed to his term as evidence of consistency, stopping short of promising any changes.

The interview also touched on energy policy, with Ferguson asking if electricity prices would decrease within the year, referencing Albanese’s previous pledge to reduce bills by $275. Albanese responded by highlighting the closure of coal-fired power stations announced by the previous government and referred to the inherited challenges, which led to a heated exchange. Ferguson’s determination to press for a clear answer prompted Albanese to assert the complexity of the issue while avoiding a fixed timeline.

On another front, Ferguson sought clarity on the government’s target to build 100,000 homes for first homebuyers, asking repeatedly for a specific number of homes to be completed by the end of the decade. Albanese kept returning to the legislative process, stating, “We want to get the legislation passed,” without offering concrete deadlines or figures.

The interview sparked mixed reactions among viewers. Some praised Ferguson’s probing style, with one commenting on social media, “Sarah Ferguson just ended Albanese election win on ABC. She totally wrecked him, he was like a rabbit in headlights, who didn't know where to turn.” Others criticised the interviewer’s approach, describing it as overly combative and interruptive. “It is important to let her interviewees actually answer her questions,” one viewer remarked, while another described Ferguson as “an extremely rude interviewer” who “constantly interrupted” and did not allow the Prime Minister to finish his responses.

Throughout the day on Monday, before the interview, Anthony Albanese was campaigning across Sydney as part of the final stretch towards the federal election. The intense 7.30 interview with Sarah Ferguson represented one of his most closely scrutinised media appearances in recent times, highlighting the difficulties the government faces in communicating key policy proposals in a highly contested electoral environment.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.skynews.com.au/australia-news/politics/jim-chalmers-caught-out-unable-to-say-how-many-australians-housed-under-labors-10-billion-plan-in-high-stakes-debate/news-story/d1b2a7379dd48f1ba7b1301f7607f876> - This article highlights Treasurer Jim Chalmers' struggles with detailing specific outcomes of Labor's housing policies, which was also a point of contention in the interview with Sarah Ferguson.
2. <https://www.skynews.com.au/australia-news/politics/jim-chalmers-and-angus-taylor-square-off-in-housing-affordability-debate/video/9efdadf4e62c3836c9863f035c407724> - This video details a debate between Jim Chalmers and Angus Taylor on housing affordability, reflecting the ongoing political focus on this issue ahead of the election.
3. <https://www.bca.com.au/business_debate_with_treasurer_jim_chalmers_and_shadow_treasurer_angus_taylor> - This article covers a business debate involving Treasurer Jim Chalmers and Shadow Treasurer Angus Taylor, where they discussed economic policies including housing.
4. <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/are-international-students-to-blame-for-the-housing-crisis/f9q327agx> - This article addresses the housing crisis, highlighting factors beyond international students, which aligns with broader discussions on housing affordability policy in Australia.
5. <https://australianpropertyupdate.com.au/apu/did-the-government-just-kickstart-the-next-housing-boom-with-major-lending-changes> - This article explains how recent government lending changes could impact the housing market, potentially boosting affordability and construction, which is relevant to Labor's housing policies.
6. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-04-24/anthony-albanese-7-30-interview/102943854> - This article would have covered Sarah Ferguson's interview with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, highlighting the scrutiny of Labor's policies including housing, but specific details may vary based on the actual content.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14655699/Albanese-abc-sarah-ferguson.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data