

**SENATOR KIM CARR
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RESEARCH**

**COMMONWEALTH CANNOT DELAY IN BANNING FLAMMABLE CLADDING
AND MUST DO MORE**

Labor welcomes Federal Industry Minister Karen Andrews MP apparent change of mind to ban the use of flammable cladding on Australian buildings, but the Government still lacks an urgent plan of action.

This change has only occurred because of the pressure from Labor and state governments.

Both the Senate and Labor have been calling for the banning of flammable cladding since 2017. It's unfortunate that the Morrison Government took 16 months to get the message.

The Morrison Government had an opportunity to take this action in February last year when the Government responded to the Senate's recommendation to ban the importation, sale and use of polyethylene core composite panels. But instead the Government chose to reject the recommendations saying it was impractical and burdensome.

The Morrison Government must stop the delays, stop the blame shifting and stop this dangerous product at the border.

This cannot be left to the states and territories alone; this is a national issue and needs national leadership.

Non-compliance in the building industry is not limited to fire safety. As we have seen with the Opal Building in Sydney and other examples there are issues in the standard of glass, cement, polystyrene and steel.

The Government has already wasted a year by not implementing all the recommendations of the Shergold-Weir report, *Building Confidence* which it has had since September 2017 and seeks to address these issues.

A key recommendation of both *Building Confidence* and the Senate report is the introduction of a national licencing scheme for building practitioners, which Labor supports.

The deregulation agenda in the building industry has failed to protect public safety, but Minister Andrews still refuses to recognise this.

The standard that you walk past is the standard that you accept.

This is why Labor wants greater vigilance in the inspection of building materials used in Australia and a national approach to regulation within the building and construction industry.

Building regulation will be a priority for a Shorten Labor Government.

Labor has already committed to strengthening building regulation by:

- A total ban on the importation, sale and use of flammable polyethylene core aluminium composite panels.
- The establishment of a national licensing scheme for all building practitioners, with requirements for continued professional development.
- A penalties regime for all building practitioners and companies who knowingly use non-compliant materials.

We need to restore confidence in the safety of our high rise buildings and their construction.

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