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## **Regional WA Needs a \$5,000 FHOG Boost**

Master Builders is campaigning for the McGowan Government to provide a \$5,000 First Home Owner Grant (FHOG) boost for the Pilbara, Kimberley, Mid-West, Great Southern, South West and Goldfields regions in the upcoming 2018 State Budget.

Director Michael McLean said builders in the Pilbara, Kimberley, Mid-West, Great Southern, South West and Goldfields regions make up over 30% of the Association's membership and they are facing serious difficulties in today's depressed economic climate.

"Some regions across the state have been doing it tough for several years now so we think prospective home buyers could do with a modest boost to kick-start their home ownership dream," Mr McLean said.

"The building approvals data from most regional Councils highlights a depressing trend which has contributed to significant downturns in local building business and the loss of skilled labour in many cases from these regional towns.

"A 12-month \$5,000 boost to FHOG, targeted across regional WA, would provide a cost-effective economic stimulus to get the local building industry going again and lift the spirit of regional folk."

Master Builders has already written to Treasurer Ben Wyatt about the importance of retaining the \$10,000 FHOG in its entirety and giving regional WA an extra boost of \$5,000. This correspondence was also sent to Premier Mark McGowan, Housing Minister Peter Tinley, Commerce Minister Bill Johnston, Small Business Minister Paul Papalia and Regional Development Minister Alannah MacTiernan.

As WA's peak building and construction industry body, Master Builders has now launched an online campaign across all its social media channels in the lead up to the May Budget announcement.

"Master Builders works tirelessly to represent the majority of housing builders, many of whom are small to medium businesses, but we need more than one voice to ensure this important message is heard," Mr McLean said.

"Master Builders firmly believes the \$10,000 FHOG in conjunction with a \$5,000 boost for regional WA should be viewed as an investment in jobs, which is in line with the State Government's Jobs Act, and not a cost to taxpayers. In addition to sustaining our industry, this stimulus will create invaluable multiplier effects that benefit many other sectors."

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