

## The Rev The Hon Professor Brian Howe AO

For his outstanding contribution beyond the expectations of the person's particular field of endeavour which has influenced the thinking or general well-being of the wider community in the area of social work.

*Doctor of Social Work (honoris causa) [Hon DSW]  
Conferring ceremony: 30 October 2015*

### Citation

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present The Reverend Professor Brian Leslie Howe to you for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters in Social Work (honoris causa).

Professor Howe was *Deputy Prime Minister of Australia* between 1991 and 1995, a member of the federal cabinet between 1984 and 1996, and served as a minister in the defence, social security, health, housing and community services portfolios.

As a minister, he distinguished himself by introducing major policy initiatives:

- In Social Security, he reformed family payments and introduced child support;
- In Health, he established the National Mental Health Strategy and the Commonwealth Dental Scheme.

Professor Howe was also responsible for key commonwealth-state initiatives, including the Commonwealth State Disability Agreement and the Building Better Cities program.

In the early 1970s, Professor Howe was the founding director of the Centre for Urban Research and Action, known as CURA. It was a model of research and action based on his experience studying in Chicago from 1965 to 1967, and particularly his involvement in the civil rights and anti-poverty movements.

CURA tackled major changes in inner city Melbourne, including homelessness, the demolition of housing for high-rise estates, freeway construction, the rights of tenants, the marginalisation of ethnic groups, and the provision of social services.

Before entering parliament in 1977, Professor Howe was a Minister in the Uniting Church and before that the Methodist Church. He remains an ordained minister of the Uniting Church.

After leaving parliament in 1996, Professor Howe was appointed Schultz Visiting Professor at the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University in the United States.

Professor Howe has spent much of his post-parliamentary career working in an honorary capacity, developing policies on public health, urban renewal, insecure work and disability rights, demonstrating his ongoing commitment to public service.

He has served on the Board of the Brotherhood of St Laurence; was a founding director of the Australia and New Zealand School of Government; and was chairman of the Victorian Disability Housing Trust and of Housing Choices Australia.

Professor Howe serves on the Patrons Council of the Epilepsy Foundation of Victoria and is a Professorial fellow at the University of Melbourne's Centre for Public Policy.

In 2001, he was made a Member of the Order of Australia for service to the parliament and people of Australia, through policy and legislative reform in social justice, health and urban development. In 2008, he was made an Officer in the Order of Australia for service to education and the community as an academic, advocate for social sustainability and facilitator of debate about public policy.

Chancellor, I present Brian Howe for the award of Doctor of Letters in Social Work (honoris causa).