

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in response to the proposed changes to the

Currently I am awaiting a response to my submission for the Disability Support Pension. The proposed changes to portability of the Disability Support Pension stand to make a huge difference to mine and others situations.

The recent reduction in portability to 6 weeks for the Pension reduced the ability of pensioners to travel and spend time with loved ones, including access to appropriate care and a supportive lifestyle.

The disabled have a basic right to travel which is protected under a UN Convention. Myself, I have a diagnosis of Bipolar Type I with psychotic features. My symptoms are eased in tropical climates and under the current rules I would aim to travel overseas during winter months, with access to private medical care in Australia.

The proposed reduction to 4 weeks of travel would impose undue restrictions on my freedom of movement and access to appropriate care. The current arrangements are more fair and flexible.

My proposals for the portability of Disability Support Pensions would be as follows:

- a) Allow pensioners to travel outside the 4 week period with the assent of medical specialists
- b) Allow pensioners to travel with payments being suspended 6 weeks after the date of travel, with automatic recommencement upon return to Australia
- c) The continuation of Indefinite Portability provisions allowing the severely ill to still travel

These changes allow the disabled to find lifestyles still providing a level of comfort and respect in spite of their disability. The proposed changes will simply keep the disabled in Australia. The budgetary implications are minimal. The money brought into Australia by overseas pensioners far outweighs that which flows out by those on the Disability Support Pension.

I hope that Senators take this and other submissions seriously and give careful consideration to the cruel changes currently proposed to the Disability Support Pension.

Kind Regards,