

14th July 2007

Dear Secretary,

I am writing to express our concern about the large increases in the price of food and also the price of petrol over the last two years. My husband and I are both pensioners. My husband receives some superannuation but nevertheless our combined income according to current statistics puts us below the poverty line.

We live very carefully and scour the local newspapers for supermarkets having the best specials. We always buy the cheapest cuts of meat. For us both eating a steak is a memory of days gone by. Over the past two years it seems that food prices have rocketed. Fruit and vegetables prices have soared too. Only today I saw tomatoes at \$7.00kg.(they have been much higher) and apples selling for \$5.80kg, bananas \$7 a kg.

We believe in eating healthy food and cans and processed foods are a rare item on our table. We have always eaten plenty of fruit and vegetables.

In Suburban Sydney a trip to a shopping centre is hardly ever a short walk away. Our nearest shops are a good 20 – 25 minute walking distance from our home. Public transport is poor in our area. Our car a Mitsubishi Lancer is 12 years old but still serves us well. However, It has to be fed petrol regularly and we spend approximately \$20 a week filling it up. Maintenance costs are another expense and these have increased over the years. This is a significant amount for pensioners, but we believe at 81 years of age we should be able to continue running our car and maintain our independence.

Electricity bills are dreaded especially during the winter months. We hope this letter will be of some assistance in your deliberations and we will be interested to hear the report from the Committee. Please don't bury it!

Best Wishes from