

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
Inquiry into the cost of Living pressures on older Australians

I am an old age pensioner living in a strata titled village for over 55s and my only source of income is the pension. When I retired to look after my disabled wife we bought a caravan so that we would have a way of enjoying a holiday each year. As the little money we had soon ran out we had to sell the Caravan as we needed the money to subsidise our every day living.

The cost of Strata Fees are rising due the high cost of maintenance now charged by Tradesmen for their services

Food prices are constantly on the rise and our ability to buy fresh vegetables and fruit has now almost ceased. We have reduced our food intake considerably (This has improved our figure) to where we only have one meal a day and supplement this with toast or a sandwich.

As my wife is not well enough to catch public transport it is necessary for us to run a car and the cost of the maintenance and fuel on our 10 year old vehicle absorbs every spare dollar that we have. This vehicle is now 10 years old and has covered 154,000 kilometres and will have to keep going as there is no way we could replace it.

Our pension is so low that I will soon have to give up my only pleasure, of playing Lawn Bowls as Club Memberships are rising and also the cost of green fees.

This month we have had to replace our 15 year old washing machine and even the cheapest machines are over \$500 delivered.

With a total Income from the pension of less than \$25000 per year and with all the costs that any other home owner has we are now spending the money we received from selling our caravan and when that is gone there will not be anything left to survive on.

We hear on the news that they refer to low income families as under \$50,000 so it is very hard for people with incomes far in excess of this to understand what it is like to live on less than \$25000.

When you listen to politicians talk they refer to how they must help the families, and give tax concessions to the high income earners and this offers little help to pensioners who deserve a better deal than they are receiving.

It's about time that a decent income was given to pensioners and then indexed to the same index that grants wage rises to workers and politicians.

In the village that I live in there are 50 pensioners just waiting for a political party to offer them decent living conditions that would enable them to live on meals that are nutritious.

Trusting you will give this request your consideration

Peter Craig