

To Elton Humphery
Committee Secretary
Community Affairs Committee
Department of the Senate

I am writing on behalf of my wife and myself who are both pensioners. Like many other pensioners we struggle to cover the ever increasing cost of goods such as groceries, vegetables, meat, petrol and the necessities such as bread, milk etc.

Low and high income earners have received wage rises and tax deductions recently whilst pensioners receive an extremely small increase. I honestly believe that the Federal Government think that pensioners only need half as much as their younger counterparts to live in reasonable comfort and be able to afford a holiday once in a while.

I receive a small retirement pension from my working days at Telecom. I have just received a letter from Com Super to inform me that instead of a small six monthly rise I will receive nought as there has been no rise in the CPI according to the Government: i.e. the cost of living has not risen in the past six months ?? We are probably the lucky ones who receive a little bit extra. Heaven help the poor people who receive only the basic pension. I don't know how they exist.

I might add that for every dollar I receive from Com Super my Centrelink pension is reduced by 40 cents so the actual increase is only 60 cents. I may be wrong but I seem to remember that not long ago the pension was a percentage of the average wage. As this has risen several times in the past 12 months I am wondering why the pension is still as low as it is? We believe that we have been of value to our community and nation during our lives and we desire to live with respect and dignity in our latter years. We also believe that it is imperative that those who are responsible for adjustments made to the CPI should be made more aware of the situation that pensioners face due to rising living costs which effects their standards of living.

Peter and Mary Wright.