

The Senate Community Affairs Committee

The Federal member for Wide Bay, Mr. Warren Truss has informed me that there is a Senate Inquiry into the cost of living pressures on older Australians, and he has supplied the Inquiry's terms of reference to me.

As a single aged pensioner living in the Maryborough Wide Bay area, I wish to make the following submissions for your consideration.

(a) (i) **High price of petrol and food.**

On Thursday 12th July the price of fuel rose by 10 cents a litre overnight to \$1.29.9.

This is blatant profiteering. If the government can't or won't control fuel pricing I suggest all pensioners should get discounted fuel by producing their pension cards.

I must have the use of my vehicle for medical treatment.

Food prices have escalated in the last six (6) months by at least 10%. Meat, fruit and vegetables by 40 to 50%. I submit a cash docket for groceries for a two week period, (meat, fruit and vegetables not included) milk has just risen by 25 cents a litre.

(ii) **Electricity**

This has risen by 10% with a further 10% rise shortly. The utilities allowance paid to pensioners by the government has not risen in years.

(iii) **Dental care**

This is almost non-existent in this area. The waiting list for basic dental care is 3 to 5 years here.

Public health care; I am supposed to have a colonoscopy but am told the waiting list 12 to 18 months; perhaps longer.

(b) **Participate in the community and social isolation**

Because of the high cost of basic necessities one is unable to afford to go out on community outings or any other form of social outing or entertainment. Also the high cost of clothing, hair care and cosmetics are prohibitive.

(d) **Pension and concession arrangements**

These need to be increased greatly, to begin with a single pension has to rise to \$25,000 per annum and all concession payments on rates, car registration, utilities, house and contents insurance etc. by 25%.

(e) **Review over the past 10 years**

Assistance is sorely needed as we older Australians are the workforce of yesteryear who worked hard, paid their taxes, never collected unemployment (dole) payments and had no superannuation funds, or funding available are now being treated like second class citizens by being forced to exist on to-days pensions.

I have listed below my fixed costs per annum taken from receipts I have kept over the last 12 months. With careful management I am left with very little for luxuries or for the replacement of household appliances or vehicle.

I find it exceedingly difficult to manage on the present pension and implore the government to raise the payment forthwith.

Yours faithfully

Irene J. Kirkwood



Coles Supermarkets Australia Pty Ltd
Tax Invoice ABN: 45 004 189 708



Maryborough Store: 4479
Alice Street Maryborough 4650
Phone: (07) 4122 1055 Receipt: 9232
Fax: (07) 4123 0430

Open Monday to Friday 8:00am - 9:00pm
Open Saturday 8:00am - 5:00pm
Sunday Closed

Date: 13-Jul-2007 Time: 16:00
Reg 6 Served By: Kasey - 337

	\$
SAUSAGES THIN BBQ PERKG	6.21
%SAVINGS FROZEN PIES 900GRAM	3.49
YLC FARMLAND FROZEN 1KG	2.46
S B COLES FROZEN PEA 1KG	1.79
%SAVINGS CHEESECAKE 4 450GRAM	2.63
%FARMLAND 4PK SNACK:F 500GRAM	3.19
DAIRY MILK FULL CRE 2LITRE	2.09
S B COLES CHEESE TAS 1KG	5.49
S B COLES DAIRYKNOB 1KG	2.19
INSTANT TOMATO SOUP 80GRAM	0.89
FARMLAND COCONUT DES 250GRAM	0.99
FARMLAND CHOC BTTNS DARK COOK	2.19
RCPE MX CURRIED SAUS 35GRAM	1.37
MAGGI COOK IN THE PD 46GRAM	1.44
MCKENZIES PEAS GREEN 500GRAM	1.08
%ARNOTTS FAMILY ASSOR 500GRAM	3.62
NERADA TEA BAGS 200P 200PACK	4.20
%Y L COLES CRINKLE CU 250GRAM	2.29
%Y L COLES CRINKLE CU 250GRAM	2.29
S B COLES / SAVINGS 375GRAM	4.41
%S B COLES ICECREAM C 30PACK	1.59
FARMLAND CHEESE PARM 125GRAM	2.69
S B COLES/SAVINGS EG 700GRAM	2.29
PREMIER RICE LONG GR 2KG	2.82
BEEF CUBES 71GRAM	1.55
CHICKN CUBES 71GRAM	1.55
%FRESH CINNAMON BUN 250GRAM	2.95
TIP TOP BREAD FRUIT 520GRAM	2.98
HEINZ VSP SOUP VEG B 535GRAM	1.99
SOUP SWTCORN POTATO 535GRAM	1.99
MASSEL STOCK POWDER: 168GRAM	2.39
TRIDENT BABY CUT COR 410GRAM	1.02
S B COLES/ SAVINGS T 400GRAM	0.49
S B COLES RED KIDNEY 420GRAM	0.93
FOUNTAIN SAUCE TOMAT 600ML	1.78
Y L COLES TOMATO PAS 375GRAM	1.89
MCKENZIES PEPPER WHI 50GRAM	1.55
FARMLAND TABLE SALT 500GRAM	0.76

Sub Total \$87.52
Rounding -0.02
Total for 38 items \$87.50
Cash 90.00
Change 2.50
GST INCLUDED IN TOTAL \$2.00

Please retain receipt for refund

Mr. J. Howard
Prime Minister
Parliament House
Canberra. ACT.

1st. June 2007

Dear Mr. Howard,

I am a single aged pensioner and I receive \$530.90 a fortnight or \$13803.00 pension per annum.

I have listed below my fixed costs per annum taken from receipts I have kept over the last twelve months.

Land and water rates	1580.00
Insurances Car \$310.00 House and Contents \$656.00	966.00
Car registration	489.00
RACQ Membership	154.00
Car service and maintenance	832.00
House maintenance, lawn and pest control	588.00
Electricity	531.00
Telephone	695.00
Medication, Doctor, Dental	1003.00
Fuel	1456.00
Clothes	390.00
Groceries, meat, veggies etc.	<u>3900.00</u>
Total	12584.00

This leaves me with a total of \$46.00 per fortnight for such luxuries as entertainment, holidays, hair – do's and replacement of household goods and vehicle etc.

I appreciate the promised one off payment of \$500.00 in the budget which will be put aside as my old refrigerator and washing machine are on their last legs.

The cost of living has gone up by 10% but our last pension rise was only 2.5%.

I find it exceedingly difficult to manage on my present pension therefore I implore you to raise the pension level to at least \$17000.00 before the next election.

I believe financial consultants quote a figure of \$25000.00 per annum (minimum) as a basic living income.

Mr. Howard I resent the fact that every woman in this country (married or not) who has a baby receives \$4000.00 and yet my generation who has worked hard all their lives and paid taxes are treated like second class citizens.

I look forward to your reply with interest.

Yours faithfully



Irene J. Kirkwood