

Mrs D Lindsay

Senate Community Affairs Committee

I am more than happy to advise of some of my problems with the ever high cost of living for older Australians. I am a self funded retiree living off an allocated pension from which I draw the minimum amount and rent from an investment property.

Food costs are forever rising and I find I cannot have my family over often as bills for rate, electricity, Insurance are so high I get myself upset thinking about it. I top my petrol up each week so that I'm not spending too much. I've just had to have new tyres fitted and brakes fixed.

We've just been advised that electricity costs are going up, I generally sit in the dark to watch TV, and water charges are a bone of contention. I feel this should have been looked at years ago. I would give the Beattie Government a minus 1 for their management over the years.

I visit the dentist once a year as each visit costs over \$1000, even with MBF Insurance. The High cost of living curtails outings and I get so angry to see people on the pension being able to afford these luxuries, I even stand in the Newsagents and see them spending so much money on lotto and scratchies. Just to get that little extra put into your account each fortnight would make such a difference. A lot of self funded retirees are having a struggle, we're not all millionaires. I feel that everyone over 70 years of age who have worked hard should be entitled to something. My Husband ceased work at 52 years as he had Alzheimer's Disease and I struggled on a Sales Assistant salary, even when he went into a nursing home, there was no help so I have skimped and saved forever. He passed away 14 years ago and I worked until I was 66 years of age.

It infuriates me that foreigners get so much help when the likes of my Husband and myself worked so hard, paid our taxes and are penalised. Years ago you receive a pension when you became a Widow. The cost of living doesn't halve when you're on your own, and any repairs have to be done by tradesmen whereas a Husband can generally carry out this work.

The budget never helps our situation, we got \$500 last time which is appreciated but girls are paid so much more to go and have babies. I know it's costly to raise a family these days but spare a thought for us when we try to afford a few luxuries to share with our Grandchildren.